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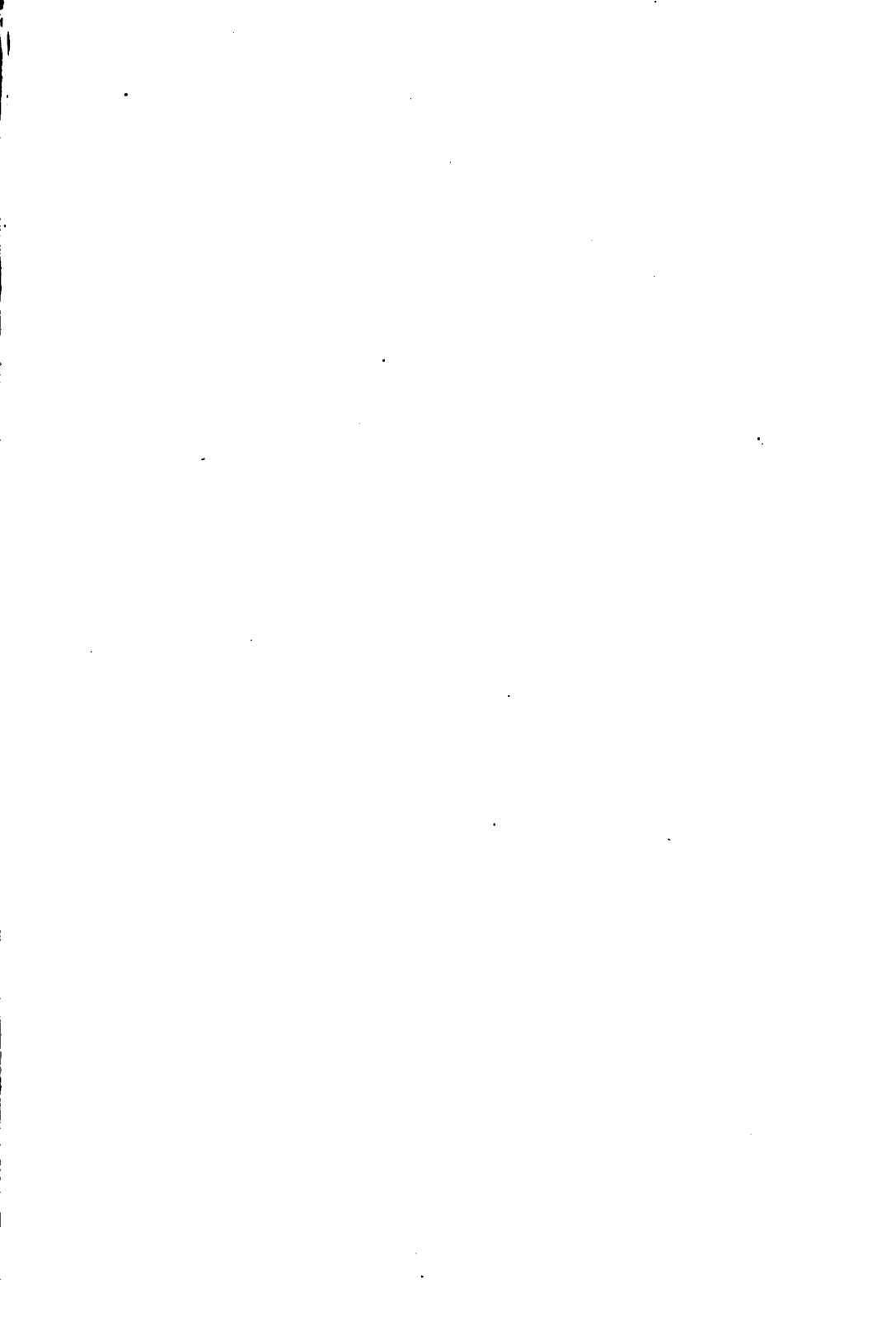
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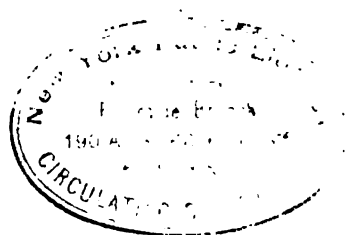


# THE RIVIERA



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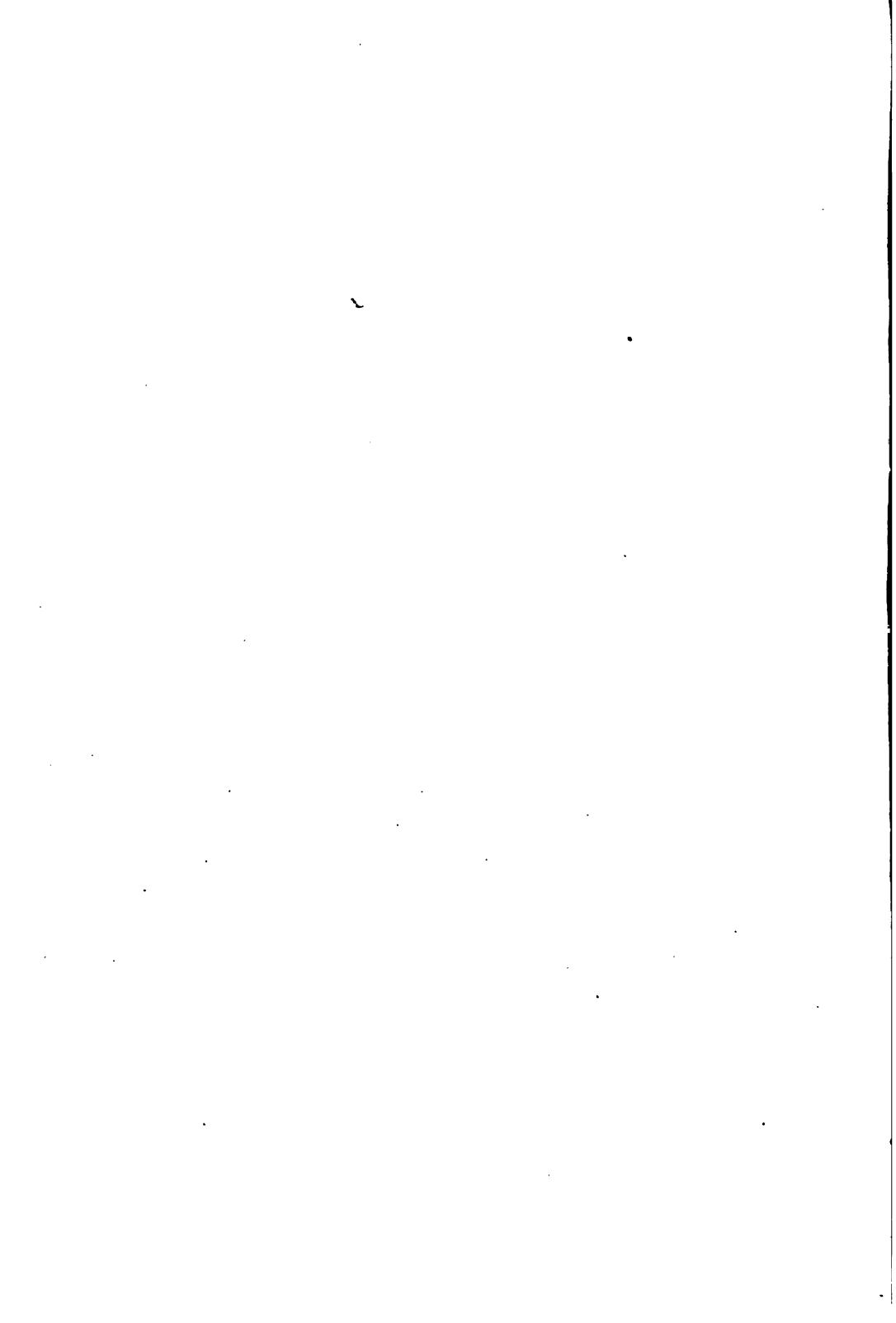
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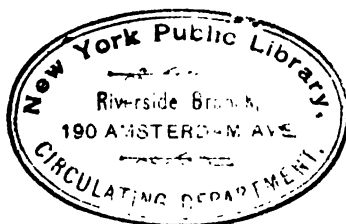


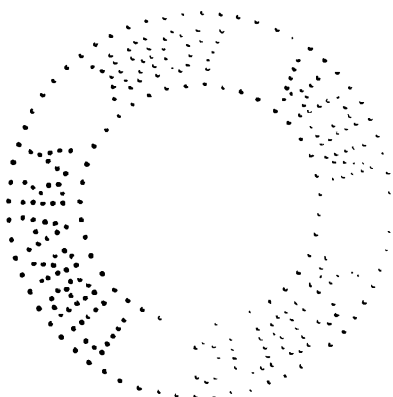
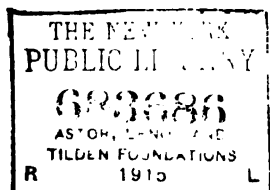
MONTE CARLO FROM THE EAST



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**THE RIVIERA**  
**PAINTED & DESCRIBED**  
**BY WILLIAM SCOTT**  
**PUBLISHED BY A. & C.**  
**BLACK · LONDON · MCMVII**





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DEDICATED TO

**Her Royal Highness The Princess Louise**

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*Contes and Berre.*

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*Sixteen Head- and Tailpieces in Black and White*

*Map at end of Volume*

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*The Esterelles, from La Croisette, Cannes.*

## CHAPTER I

### THE SUNNY SOUTH

Droops the heavy-blossom'd bower, hangs the heavy-fruited tree—  
Summer isles of Eden lying in dark-purple spheres of sea.

TENNYSON.

THE Riviera! What varying thoughts and emotions are called up by this simple name! Never need its meaning be explained. We seem to have always known its associations, to have been long familiar with its features, to have grown up in its acquaintance, as with some old and cherished friend.

Nor when we reach the Mediterranean shores for the first time do we experience any feelings of unpleasant strangeness, still less of disappointment. Here, at last, can we realise our dreams; or even find our keenest expectations far surpassed. Though so much has been said and written about the Sunny South, the half has never yet been told, nor may be told in words. The wonders of Nature cannot be fully expressed in mere human signs and symbols; translated, so to speak, into a lesser form of speech. To be understood they must

## Riviera

themselves utter their mysteries direct to the ears of the listener, display them before the eyes of the beholder, thus appealing to his heart with their own wondrous voices.

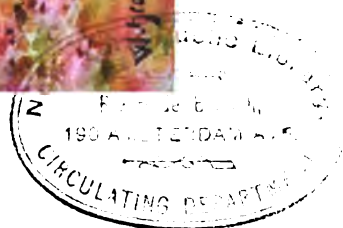
And the receptivity, the power of hearing, of seeing, and of feeling truly, must be there ; must be awake or wakening, if the message is to be understood. Too many of us are deaf and blind to these impalpable influences ; we have not learned to see, we know not how to listen ; and Nature sings her sweet wild song to the flowers, and skies, and stars, while we poor mortals grope along our thoughtless way in hopeless insensibility to her charms. 'Tis but a foolish, clumsy phrase which tells us that "beauty is in the eye of the beholder," else might all ugly things seem fair ; but it is true that the power to see beauty must be there, the sympathy to feel, the capacity to vibrate in harmony with the all-pervading life of Nature, expressed in sound, colour, and form.

And how few of those who come in crowds to the Riviera can be said to see it as it really is. They contemplate it only through the cloudy medium of their prejudices, their habits, or their fancies. They are, in a way, conscious of certain things about them ; they can distinguish a hill, or a tree, or a flower, but the special qualities of these objects, and, still more, their exquisite relations to each other, often escape notice. How many a seasoned *habitué* who knows well his Nice or Monte, and is found season after season in the same old haunts, just remembers his previous excitements and varying fortunes, is just vaguely aware that the sky





ON THE SHORE NEAR CARQUEIRANNE



## Riviera

Like so many other customs, this one has been fixed far more by fashion than by reason, convenience, or common sense. It is followed blindly and unwisely by the crowds of visitors who do not venture to think for themselves, just like the silliest flock of sheep that ever followed a bell-wether through a gap, or over a heap of stones. As sure as Easter has come and gone, whether it be early or whether it be late, whether the season be favourable or the reverse, so surely do most of the strangers—especially the English—think it absolutely necessary to leave the Riviera ; though most of them would be puzzled to give an intelligent reason for the move. The bright spring days may be lengthening into summer, the woods may be at their fairest, the flowers at the climax of their gorgeous blooming time, and the soft air at its balmiest and its best. No matter ! Fashion says “ Go ! ” and they go, as if some inexorable fate had pronounced its stern decree.

But the few who are not slaves of Fashion, who dare to follow their own tastes and inclinations without submitting to the dictates of others, and venture to stay on through the long sweet days of the May-time and until June has begun its reign, know that then of all whiles is the Riviera at its brightest and its best. They learn to love it more and more, and hesitate to leave it, for it has ceased to be a mere polite acquaintance, and has become a cordial friend. Foreign residents who have learned by experience are often heard to declare—half cynically, perhaps,—that the Riviera begins to be specially enjoyable when all the casual visitors have



STREET IN HYÈRES





## The Sunny South

left it. The judgment may seem harsh, but it is at least well founded, in spite of its obvious double meaning.

While those who deliberately choose to renounce opportunities of pleasure and benefit have only themselves to blame for the result, the strongest argument against the untimely exodus of visitors from the Riviera is that it very often destroys the beneficial effects of the winter sojourn. An invalid may feel considerably strengthened, or even cured, while the cure is not yet so complete as to justify a sudden plunge, without any intermediate period of preparation, direct into the treacherous air of a bleak spring-time such as England often experiences. A much wiser course for those to follow who wish to realise the full benefit of their visit to the South, would be to remain later than the usual fashionable period, and then seek to prepare themselves for a return home by staying for a time in some other locality, perhaps at a moderate height above the sea-level and in a bracing air. Plenty of such places are already available, though the hotel accommodation may not yet be so luxurious as in the first-class houses of the Riviera itself.

While this suggestion refers mainly to invalids who have visited the Riviera in search of health, it also opens up possibilities affecting other classes of visitors. We very seldom realise how large a proportion of the country in the immediate neighbourhood of what we already know as the Riviera, both French and Italian, is, to foreigners, still practically unexplored. There are



## Riviera

whole districts full of natural beauty, often full also of historic interest, where few strangers have ever penetrated, where the mode of living is still simple and elementary, and the manners of the people are untainted by constant contact with the vitiating influences too often produced by large towns. The French and Italians themselves are beginning to realise that their respective countries yet possess charms hitherto unknown to most of them ; and nearly every season finds some fresh village, or town, or district, on the shore or among the hills, opened up to visitors and endowed with improved accommodation. Even along the usual roads there are many unknown places of interest ; and the rapidly spreading habit of using motor cars is bringing them into notice. Still more lie but a short distance from the beaten tracks and invite exploration, while for those who love mountains and mountain climbing the possibilities of new pleasures are enormous.

Occasionally one may meet a traveller, more adventurous than the rest, who has ascended Monte Bego or Monte Grammondo, and enjoyed the superb views from their summits ; but who, out of all the thousands crowding the *trains de luxe*, and rushing blindly from one well-known resort to another, has ever ventured to explore the *Laghi* or *Vallone delle Meravegie*, or wandered over those strange incised rocks of the *Val Fontanalba*, with their quaint records of art in its very infancy and beginning ?<sup>1</sup> For mountain

<sup>1</sup> See *The Prehistoric Rock Engravings in the Italian Maritime Alps*, C. Bicknell, Bordighera, 1902, P. Gibelli.

## The Sunny South

lovers who do not need as a daily stimulant the wild excitement of a Matterhorn or some equally perilous peak, what pleasanter trip of two or three weeks than to leave the Riviera from some point on the Italian side—say Albenga—and work their way into Piedmont with knapsack and alpenstock along the ridges of the “Pre-Alpi,” where they would certainly not be incommoded by crowds of indolent tourists, nor be tempted to over-indulgence in sumptuous hotels ; but where the charms of the hills could be enjoyed to the full, with the excitement of a new experience every hour.

Travellers should avoid being seen taking photographs in the neighbourhood of fortifications or military roads, of which some are to be found even in the wildest and most unlikely districts, as the authorities are extremely severe in their restrictions, even as regards the most harmless views. They are perfectly incapable of distinguishing between an innocent snap-shot of a tree, a peasant's cottage, or even the peasant himself, and a deliberate attempt to record military positions or strategic roads. Therefore, photographers beware !

What a happy hunting-ground for those with artistic tastes, and a love for Nature in her wilder aspects, is to be found in the valley of the Var behind Nice ! What picturesque villages perched in apparently inaccessible situations ; what stern gorges, rushing torrents, and pine-clad hills ! What strong bracing air, cheapest and best of tonics for wearied brains and lazy limbs !

The choice of a place of residence for an invalid will usually be made by, or in consultation with some

## Riviera

medical adviser who may happen to be more or less acquainted with the special characteristics of the different resorts, and their suitability to the patient's needs. Those who prefer to choose for themselves will have no difficulty in finding dozens of medical treatises on the subject ; though they may not find it easy to decide when doctors differ, as these proverbially do.

The ordinary visitor who is not ill, and only seeks an agreeable climate, combined with his favourite amusements, during the winter months, has a very wide choice open to him. It does not interest him to enter into scientific disquisitions as to this or that slight variation of warmth, dryness, or windiness. He is content to know, in general terms, that the Riviera is a certain strip of shore lying along part of the Mediterranean—say between Toulon and Spezia—and so protected by the hills behind it as to be to a great extent free from the cold winds of the north and east. The favourable climatic conditions which result from this peculiar geographical situation form one of the chief attractions of the Riviera, and have been described, enlarged upon, and even minutely analysed, so many times that there is no need to add anything here. But these very conditions, so favourable to human beings, also render possible the cultivation of many trees, plants, flowers, and fruits that in the North are only reared with the greatest difficulty, if at all ; and thus, by the pleasure their presence gives, the visitor's enjoyment is immensely increased. Not only this, but flowers are produced in profusion during the winter months, a



OLD CHURCH, HYÈRES





## The Sunny South

season which in the North is their time of repose. On the Riviera, on the other hand, the summer is their resting time. Casual visitors who happen to see, for instance, a Riviera rose-garden in the summer-time are often astonished at the neglect and abandonment everywhere apparent. Not a drop of water is ever given through the months of scorching sunshine ; neither care nor pruning is bestowed. The flowers that may happen to open are rudely left to die. Weeds grow thickly and unchecked. But in September work recommences, the ground is turned over ; weeds are removed or dug in ; the soil is fed ; the trees are thoroughly pruned ; and when the autumn rains arrive a new vegetation, rich and vigorous, soon shows itself ; flowering takes place anew ; and when the winter visitors appear there are roses ready to welcome them.

Who has not heard of the palm-trees that grow with such splendid luxuriance all along the Riviera ? They form one of its loveliest as well as one of its most distinguishing features. There are many varieties. The *Phœnix dactylifera* from North Africa, the *P. canariensis*, the *Brahea Roezlii* or Blue Palm of Arizona, the *Chamærops humilis*, the *Pritchardia filifera*, and the rarer *Brahea dulcis*, are only some of the best-known names. They are now acclimatised so thoroughly as to be cultivated and exported by thousands to adorn the hot-houses and salons of the North. Not only does the palm lend itself very readily to transplanting, but its leaves form a not inconsiderable article of commerce. Catholics use them in large quantities for



## Riviera

their feast of Palm Sunday, and Jews for their feast of Tabernacles. Where the trees are not cultivated for their beauty, the leaves are tied up straight in a line with the trunk, and, forced to grow thus for months without proper access to the air, by this means they are blanched. Curiously woven religious emblems or ornaments are often made of these blanched leaves, and after being duly blessed are kept piously till the next year's festival.

It is the original date-palm, introduced at the time of the Crusades, tall from its steady growth of centuries, picturesque in its wild, natural grouping—as it may be seen, for instance, at Bordighera and near the “Madonna della Ruota”—that really has the true Oriental character with which we are familiar, and specially recalls to us the associations of the East. We almost look for white burnoused Arabs lounging in the shade, their camels grouped near the tents of hair, and veiled maidens going to the well with their grey earthen pitchers. No longer a stranger or an exile, this lord of the desert has obtained undisputed sovereignty among us; it is everywhere honoured and tended; has the proudest place in our gardens; is surrounded by a brilliant court of varied and rival foliage :—

And Europe's violets, faintly sweet,  
Purple the moss-beds at its feet.

Less distinguished, though more useful than the palm, and with an exquisite beauty all its own, the olive is almost universal. Generally considered indigenous, it would yet appear that its cultivation dates only from



S. CASSIEN, NEAR CANNES





## The Sunny South

post-Roman times, seeing that oil figures largely among the imports of the Imperial period. So largely has this cultivation extended, that for many centuries the production of oil has been the chief resource of the inhabitants. In spite of a recent considerable reduction in the number of trees in some parts, owing to the increased production of flowers, the amount of money still earned is very large. For instance, in the small village of Apricale, with little more than two thousand inhabitants, a fairly good or medium *annata*, a year's yield, will bring to the place about half a million lire (£20,000) of gross income, and this is about doubled in a really good season.

In Provence the system of cultivation is generally superior to that which prevails along the Italian Riviera, and more resembles that in use in Tuscany. Unfortunately the olive is subject to several diseases and insect pests which, if not carefully combated, may lead to the utter destruction of the trees through whole districts. The tiny white flowers appear in April or May, according to the favourableness or otherwise of the season,—*Pana d' Aprile, Pana gentile*, say the Italian peasants,—and then in May or June these little *pane* fall in showers, like wee snowflakes, till the paths are white with them, and they lie by millions on the grass. The fruit remains behind, and, if the trees be in a healthy state, ripens by winter, when the olive harvest begins. Then the oil-mills start work, and every one is busy from morn till night picking or carrying the purple berries.

## Riviera

It may be interesting to note here that some of the earliest experiments in acclimatising the Eucalyptus—now so extensively grown both for use and beauty—were made, some forty years ago, in the gardens of M. Thuret, a famous French naturalist living at Cap d'Antibes. Trees of this kind were subsequently used to aid the drainage of marshy land in the neighbourhood of Cannes, long before such use became general in other parts.

Not only does the Riviera display an endless variety of rich foliage, but an enormous profusion of flowers. Flowers are everywhere : in formal beds, in obedient lines of ranged hues, in careless clusters, in masses, wreaths, and sprays. They appear in every possible corner, over each doorway, on every balcony ; clambering here, hanging there, covering the nakedness of ruins, and garlanding the beauty of architectural lines with a riotous joy of colour and bloom. To the dear old-fashioned flowers of home, the stocks, gilly-flowers, geraniums, violets, carnations (and such carnations—fields of them !), we add the iris, the oleander, the mimosa, the lilac, the gigantic aloe (out of whose leaves rope is now made), the yellow cassia, and many many more.

But the undisputed queen of flowers, the rose, beloved alike of gods and men, is everywhere pre-eminent :—

Red roses blow beside your garden door,  
Rose petals strew your arbour's mossy floor,  
Their scent is heavy on the idle wind  
That scarcely stirs your tresses rose-entwined.

## The Sunny South

And what a pretty legend is that which tells us the origin of the rose. How the gay god Eros, tired of his Olympian charmers, flew to earth in search of amorous adventures. On the silver sands of the Ganges bank, stretched on a tiger skin in the glowing Indian sunshine, her beautiful bare limbs palpitating with eager life, Eros found his earthly mate and was content. The long hours passed in delicious raptures, till from the heights of Olympus his forsaken mistress, Juno, discovered the happy lovers, and in the frenzy of her rage hurled one of Jove's fiercest darts with the unerring aim of jealousy, and crushed them in their last embrace. But their young lips were not divided even in the moment of their dissolution, and from that supreme kiss of love the *Rosa di Maggio*, rose of the May-time, was born. The shivered fragments of that fatal dart became the thorns along the rose's stem, to remind us of the perils as well as the joys of love, of the human as well as the divine in its nature. A god had wedded with a mortal, and from their union sprang the symbol of immortal love itself, where Eros ever lives again in his eternal youth. A poet has said :—

De l'amour la rose est l'image,  
Tous deux ont la même fraîcheur !  
Tous deux vous piquent, c'est l'usage,  
La rose au doigt, l'amour au cœur.

Among the ancient Greeks, we are told,<sup>1</sup> the rose was also the emblem of silence and of beauty. And what an eloquent silence ! filled with the odours of

<sup>1</sup> Mantegazza, *La Leggenda dei Fiori*.



## Riviera

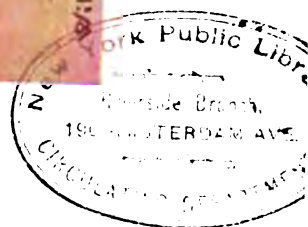
sweet thoughts too sweet for words : the pure white memories of love's kisses in the moonlight, the warm golden raptures of hot noons in Southern sunshine, the blood-red hours of passion in the pomegranate shade, the deep, dark, velvet softness of night's last caresses that can never be renewed. Of all these, by its thousand varying shades and colours, the Queen Rose reminds us, and of the beauty that has smiled upon our path. We have the tiny rosebud darling nestling in a mother's arms ; the pure child loveliness in its robes of snowy white ; the pale blush rose of a young girl's cheek at the earliest thought of love ; the shyly-opening petals as the sun's first kisses move them ; the coy yet glad and golden yielding to passion's warm embraces ; the red, reckless rapture of its full fruition ; the stately beauty of fair form and perfect outline ; and—not least, for some of us,—the faded rose-leaves cherished from a past that is ever present, that for us can never die.

In the festivals of pagan Rome the rose had an honoured place. Chambers, couches, and paths were thickly strewn with rose-leaves, and rose-garlands crowned the statues of the gods. The Emperor Nero, of whom so many harsh judgments have been recorded, had at least one good and gentle trait—he loved roses. It is said that he spent enormous sums on their cultivation.

The flower-markets of the Riviera are never-to-be-forgotten sights. We must include not merely those where foreigners go to buy a few handfuls, or armfuls, for their rooms, but the public wholesale markets held



VIEW OF CANNES FROM LA BOCCA





## The Sunny South

in the chill winter dawns while the visitors are yet asleep, where dealers buy the fair blooms still unopened, and pack them off by vanloads to Germany, Austria, or Russia. The making of baskets for this business of exportation is a flourishing industry in itself, and trains are often delayed on account of the large number of packages to be loaded.

In addition to the flowers raised for export are those cultivated to supply the great scent factories of Grasse and elsewhere. The gardens in the neighbourhood are veritable fields of flowers, and there is something truly pathetic in the sight of great sacks of lovely petals being borne to their doom. Not only are roses and violets thus sacrificed by millions, but the orange and citron trees are stripped of their floral beauties in the same way. Jasmine and myrtle, the scented geranium, the golden cassia, and the favourite tuberose—all alike are condemned to die, that their fragrance may be gathered and imprisoned for a while ; serving later, in its final exhalation, to enhance some fair woman's charms.

In certain villages of the Riviera, where Catholic festivals still keep their primitive quaintness, the procession on S. Giovanni's day has its path covered with the golden petals of the "Ginestra," while the faithful fling handfuls in the air in homage to the passing Host.

Though we no longer strew our couches with rose-petals, or shower them on our guests, the flower-wealth of the Riviera encourages our love for these gifts of Nature, and helps us to surround ourselves with them.

## Riviera

But surely no spectacle can be more painful to all true lovers of their beauty than to see millions of them flung to their death with futile recklessness in a foolish "Battle of Flowers"; trodden in the mire of the streets, under the heels of a gaping mob, that we may feebly mimic the frank, spontaneous gaiety of those days when old King Carnival really lived and reigned. Why should we allow ourselves to be yearly trapped into this worse than childish folly because interested entertainment-mongers have a keen and greedy eye to trade? The pretty flowers of our Sunny Riviera deserve another and a happier fate.



*Roquebrune.*



*The Cap d'Antibes.*

## CHAPTER II

### A BACKWARD GLANCE

THE patient researches of historians have in recent years thrown considerable light on the early inhabitants of the Riviera, their habits and vicissitudes. Far from being in accord on all points, the disagreements of these students of history are sometimes very strongly marked ; while the impatience of contradiction occasionally exhibited augurs ill for their absolute confidence in their own theories. This will not disturb the equanimity of the ordinary visitor, who, if he be deeply devoted to the subject, will probably make independent studies for himself ; while, if only moderately interested in the past, he will gladly accept—with here and there a saving clause, or a few grains of the proverbial salt of caution—what patient investigators have been able to cull from old historic records, or the scattered traces of more material evidence.

The remains of prehistoric man, cave-dweller, stone-implement user, and contemporary of animals long



## Riviera

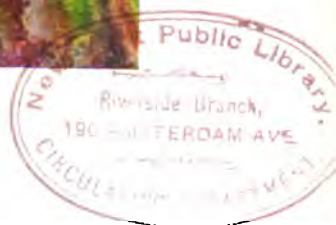
since disappeared from Europe, have only been discovered in a few localities of the district under consideration, and may be referred to later in noticing those particular places. We are thus absolved from any attempt at exploration into the misty regions of that far-away and nebulous past ; nor need we trouble ourselves with the theories of scientific investigators as to the exact origin of those earliest inhabitants to whom history has but recently endeavoured to give a name.

Above all things, let the visitor beware of accepting blindly the verdict which refers to Roman times nearly every old scrap of stone which appears to have weathered the storms of a few generations. For many individuals the very word Roman seems possessed of a magic charm, and is applied in complete disregard of the claims which later ages have upon our attention. There is a certain class of archæologists and writers, veritable fossils of antiquity, who lose their patience, and not seldom their good manners, if any one ventures to suggest that other periods besides Roman have produced strong and simple masonry ; and they will tell you that you "evidently have not a keen eye for Roman remains" if you decline to accept their unconfirmed dictum, whatever may have been your own previous experience in historical or archæological research.

This reference to the Romans and their works is necessary here in connection with archæological research in these parts because, however authorities may differ on details, there is no doubt that at one time or another, for greater or lesser periods, and in



**THE OLD TOWN, CANNES**



THE  
LIBRARY  
OF THE  
MUSEUM OF  
ART AND  
ARCHAEOLOGY  
OF THE  
UNIVERSITY OF  
CHICAGO

## A Backward Glance

varying degrees, Roman influence extended practically all along what we now speak of as the Riviera.

The subject has been so amply treated by Mr. Bullock Hall<sup>1</sup> in his scholarly and comprehensive work, that there is no need to go minutely over the ground he has traversed. But it is also true that long before the Roman domination, or even the beginning of Rome's influence, the greater part of the inhabitants of the Riviera bore a name and possessed characteristics which have remained to the present time.

The Riviera as we know it now really forms part of ancient Liguria, and Ligurian it remains to-day, the name being retained and constantly used as regards the Italian portion at least ; while the special characteristics of the people are little changed, and may be traced, often not too agreeably, by those who are brought into intimate relations with them. If length of possession be something to be proud of, the Ligurians may well be excused a certain honest pride ; for they have remained rooted to their soil, their hills, and their shores, for upwards of three thousand years.<sup>2</sup>

Although originally the ancient province of Liguria doubtless extended as far as the Rhône valley, we know that some six hundred years before the Christian era a certain portion of territory towards the western extremity of the province was ceded to Phocæan, or Phœnician, settlers ; who founded there the city we now call Marseilles.

The descendants of these settlers extended their

<sup>1</sup> *The Romans on the Riviera*, by W. H. Bullock Hall.      <sup>2</sup> *Ibid.*

## Riviera

influence along the coast, and founded colonies in several places ; those which have interest for us to-day being *Nicaea* (Nice), with its near neighbour *Antipolis* (Antibes) on the one side, and *Monoikos* or *Monacus* (Monaco) on the other ; thus forming by degrees the independent Greek state of Massilia, though it was not occupied exclusively by Greeks.

For all practical purposes of a summary review like the present, and with due regard to the exception just mentioned, namely Monaco, it may be considered that the valley of the Var marked the limit of Greek influence eastwards, and that here the western boundary of Liguria, properly so called, was situated. From this point it extended, so far as its shore-line was concerned, right away down to Spezia, with practically no interruption, being thus—curiously enough—exactly coterminous with the district or strip of shore we now speak of as the Riviera.

Its extension inland need not detain us, as it stretched far beyond the mountains. Mr. Bullock Hall, indeed, reminds us<sup>1</sup> that its ancient capital coincided with the position of the present city of Milan,<sup>2</sup> and that the famous Seven Hills themselves were occupied by Ligurians before ever the foundations of the Eternal City were laid.

Among the many points of interest in connection with the relations of the Romans to the Ligurians—if

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> W. W. Buckland in *The World beyond the Esterelles* speaks of Genoa as having been the capital of Liguria as well as its principal seaport.

## A Backward Glance

we do not care for mere confusing accounts of sanguinary battles with wild tribes, and the usual vicissitudes of military campaigns—are the remains of the Via Aurelia and the few scattered instances of Roman settlement or colonisation. “In its Roman and international character,” says the author already quoted, “the Via Aurelia recognises no frontiers, and connects the French and Italian Rivas by an indissoluble bond.” Known by various names at various times and in different portions—Via Domitia, Via Aurelia, Via Æmilia, and Via Julia Augusta—this famous road led from Rome through Pisa, by Luna, not far from the modern Spezia and the point of division between Liguria and Etruria, by Moneglia, Sestri Levante, Rapallo, to Genoa; then along the coast to Albenga, Alassio, Diano Marina, and Oneglia; passing later by San Remo, Bordighera, and Ventimiglia to Mentone. Thence it went by Roquebrune to La Turbie and Cimiez (to avoid the Greek city of Nice), and afterwards by Cannes to Fréjus, whence it proceeded to the great Roman station at Arles.

Italy has for so long aroused unlimited sympathy, love, and enthusiasm, among other nationalities; Italians themselves are so sympathetic, so delightful as companions, so charming as friends, so courteous as hosts; their past is so full of all that makes history astounding; their art, their literature, their accomplishments hold so great a place in the world's story of civilisation; their very race itself is a blend of so many varying types, nationalities, and tendencies, that we are apt to forget,



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or fail to recognise, the marked distinctions which exist between the natives of other parts of Italy and the inhabitants of Liguria. It is true they are the subjects of the same beloved king, political sharers in the country's triumphant unity, purchased by heroic efforts and secured by the generous sacrifice of blood and treasure ; having contributed thereto their own unstinted share ; but the fact remains that they differ from their neighbours in several important features, and have retained several marked qualities they showed in ancient times. If this verdict were pronounced merely by foreigners it might be open to legitimate suspicion ; but the almost universal opinion of Italians coming from other parts of Italy to settle in Liguria, or to treat with the Ligurians, is so unanimous as to disarm all contradiction, and coincides with the stranger's experience.

It is amusing to look back more than two thousand years to the time when the tribe of the Ingaunii—whose descendants occupy the district of Albenga—were assisted, perhaps saved from utter destruction, by the generous help of the Carthaginian general Mago in their struggle against the brave Epanterii of the mountains, 205 B.C. To meet further dangers in which the general's forces were involved, he very naturally asked for the assistance of those he himself had so recently relieved. This, however, did not harmonise with the Ligurian character, desirous always to obtain all that is possible and give nothing in return ; in spite of having previously, under stress of difficulty, promised

## A Backward Glance

the most utter devotion and self-sacrifice. As the well-known Italian proverb has it :—

They promise seas and mountains,  
But they give neither fields nor fountains.

In other words, while Mago's need of help was immediate and urgent, the Ligurians calmly asked for a delay of several months before being expected to do anything.

Mago's experience of two thousand years ago is repeated to-day in numberless instances by those who are compelled to have intimate business relations with the inhabitants of the Riviera ; and we may go even still further back for an instance of their subtlety and selfishness. Referring to the cession of territory to Greek settlers in 600 B.C., Mr. Bullock Hall<sup>1</sup> remarks that they—the Ligurians—ultimately repented of the transaction. This is a quite polite way of saying that they very meanly endeavoured to get out of their bargain. He might well have added that such a course is in perfect harmony with the usual Ligurian character. From the time of Virgil, who wrote,

Apenninicolæ bellator filius Auni,<sup>2</sup> etc.,

translated by Dryden in the scathing phrase,

A true Ligurian, born to cheat,

and Martius Porcius Cato, who called them *illiterati mendacesque*, and elsewhere declared them to be “ more

<sup>1</sup> *Op. cit.* p. 49.

<sup>2</sup> *Æneid* xi. 700.

## Riviera

thieves than warriors," we may pass on to that of Dante, whom no one will accuse of being unpatriotic, or likely to be unfair to any class of his fellow-countrymen (though a modern writer has called him the "iracondo Alighieri"). In the *Inferno* (xxxiii. 151-153) he thus addresses the Genoese—the very essence and type of all that is most truly Ligurian :—

Ahi, Genovesi, uomini diversi  
D' ogni costume e pien d' ogni magagna ;  
Perche non siete voi del mondo spersi ?

And what more crushing condemnation could be uttered than that contained in the famous Tuscan saying, addressed for centuries to Liguria and the Ligurians? — "Mare senza pesce, montagne senza alberi, uomini senza fede, e donne senza vergogna." (A sea without fish, mountains without trees, men without honour, and women without shame.) Even when charity has made all possible allowance for a certain inevitable exaggeration, it must be admitted that some serious defects of character there must have been, to provoke such a unanimous verdict of disapproval.

While it is not possible in the present condition of knowledge and research to state precisely the extent of Roman influence or domination, it may be fair to say in general terms that they seem to have had no desire to form regular colonies along the coast of Liguria ; but only established sufficient authority to secure a free passage for their troops, and mark the scenes of their chief victories over opposing tribes.



ENTRANCE GATE, AURIBEAU





## A Backward Glance

One settlement, however, which was formally recognised as a Roman colony, is of interest to us, and had exceptional importance, that denominated *Forum Julii*, the modern Fréjus. This indeed did not boast a purely Roman origin, but one far more ancient. In fact we are told that here was originally the capital of the tribe called Oxybians, it being afterwards enlarged by the Greek or Phocæan settlers from Marseilles, and then was taken over by Julius Cæsar some half a century before the Christian era.

Of much less importance are the remains of Vado, neighbour of Savona, probably its senior, noted in ancient records as *burgum romanum Vadi*, yet of some interest as the neighbourhood where the Emperor Pertinax first saw the light.

To trace, within the limits of pages instead of volumes, the history of the Riviera after the decay of Roman power and influence, very broad brush-strokes will be required. It may almost be treated as the history of Genoa, with a few incidents thrown in ; for Genoa certainly has held the most important post in all the moving story.

Another broad division of which we shall have to take account is the universal struggle of the various settlements, cities, and authorities of the Riviera to resist the unceasing current of barbarian invasion. Corsairs, pirates, Turks, Saracens, barbarians, by whatever name the intruders were known, never long left the flourishing shores at peace. Mere raids for pillage and destruction alternated with partially successful attempts at



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settlement. The constant need for watchfulness, for such protection as was possible to scattered hamlets, and for the elementary arming of the population, gave rise in the course of ages to a series of developments which are full of interest, as shown in the character of the buildings which have come down to us, and the written records of the times.

No less was the whole district ravaged by intruders from beyond the hills. The Vandals of the North, and hordes of other enemies, swept down time after time upon the devoted district. There remain records of their incursions in the fifth, sixth, and seventh centuries of the Christian era ; and it may be said that its first thousand years have little else to tell us but this tale of ceaseless struggle.

The Emperor Charlemagne took his part in the work of conquest and devastation. Under his rule the different provinces were divided into counties or districts, each under the control of a Count. Later, in the middle of the tenth century, Berengarius II. united a number of these counties into "Marche" (whence the title Marchese, corresponding to our word Marquis), and we find the Magra, the Var, La Turbie, and the Po mentioned among their boundaries.<sup>1</sup> One result of this policy was gradually to weaken the Imperial power ; for the series of feudal lords thus created gathered little by little the reins of government into their own hands ; only to be ousted later by the ultimate triumph of the people.

<sup>1</sup> A. Bruno, *Storia di Savona*.

## A Backward Glance

From out the vast mass of historical material ready to our hands, we may cull one little incident not without its interest in our own time. In the first half of the eleventh century (1028) an important part of the Riviera, Porto Maurizio and its neighbourhood, belonged to the Marca or marquisate of Turin, under Olderico Manfredi, one of the most powerful lords of Italy. His daughter, Adelaide, who succeeded him in the government, took as her third husband Oddone, Count of Meriana, the second son of Humbert I. of Savoy. He died in 1060, leaving four children of the marriage; and was one of the ancestors of that illustrious House which now guides the destinies of Italy. His widow continued to rule till her death in 1091. So this part of the Riviera can boast that, though in later times it became a free commune; lost its freedom and became absorbed into the republic of Genoa; passing afterwards through endless vicissitudes and changes, it was, some eight hundred years ago, subject to the ancestors of the very sovereign to whom it now proudly owes its allegiance.<sup>1</sup>

In order thoroughly to understand some of the earlier complications which arose, it is necessary to bear in mind that in many cases the bishops of the Church, and occasionally the abbots or superiors of monasteries, exercised civil as well as ecclesiastical jurisdiction; and were, in fact, feudal lords in just the same way as the lay Conti or Marchesi. This was due in the first instance to the action of the Emperor Charlemagne, who

<sup>1</sup> G. Donaudi, *Storia di Porto Maurizio*, 1889.

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raised them to the dignity of Imperial functionaries, and settled feudalism firmly on its base. Thus is explained the fact that in later times we find so many of these ecclesiastics exercising an independent authority, the origin of which is not at first apparent. A familiar instance is that of the famous monastery in the Island of S. Honorat, off Cannes, of which Seborga, with its celebrated Mint, was a fief. They exercised the *podestà di spada* (literally "the power of the sword"), symbol of the authority of a conqueror, acquired by the sword, and that of *alta e bassa giustizia*. In other words, they had the power of life and death, as well as of punishing for minor offences, to which lesser authorities were limited.

But another element was at work, destined to lead afterwards to great results ; an element to which we are not usually accustomed to attach sufficient importance in our study of political changes. We are often at a loss to understand how such a number of small republics could have arisen gradually, and without violent revolution, before the Imperial power had ceased, or that of the feudal lords had been overthrown. It would seem, however, that while the vassals of these great chiefs still held their lands under an oath of allegiance, and paid tribute to the *Castellano* or his representative, there arose a number of associations or *compagnie*, as they were called, whose sole object was commerce.<sup>1</sup> These, while guarding their own interests, protecting the capital invested, and occupying themselves mainly

<sup>1</sup> See Donaudi, *op. cit.* p. 16.

## A Backward Glance

with traffic in foreign countries, were, even from the first, quite independent of the feudal laws, which had been imposed by conquering races, and only regarded the land. By their wealth they were able to treat advantageously with the feudal authorities, obtain grants of land, especially near the sea ; and settle in the form of little colonies. Here they built their store-houses for merchandise, and their famous *loggie* for the transaction of business.<sup>1</sup> In this way they gradually acquired increasing power, with new rights and privileges ; and being, from their very independence, obliged to provide not only for the due regulation of all commercial transactions, but also for the safety of their goods and enterprises, all the members contributed to the *colletta comune*, or common fund, which was administered by their officials for the common benefit, and afterwards gave the name to their association.

Careful research among the ancient documents drawn up by the notaries of those early times, demonstrates that the members of these *compagnie* included, indeed consisted mainly, if not exclusively, of the *majores*, or national nobility. So that while in the course of the evolution that was going on, the landowners were at once vassals of the great feudal lords as regards their properties, and at the same time independent members of the *compagnia* or commune, this commune itself by acquiring land became also a vassal, and a very powerful one, of the same central authority. The principle of association or co-operation brought with it the principle

<sup>1</sup> See, later, the notes on Levanto and its *Loggia*, which still exists.

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of elective rights in the members ; in other words, representative government ; and though in the earlier periods we do not find the name republic, but rather *comunità*, or *università* ; in the course of time it was applied to some of the chief communities as they gradually absorbed the greater part of the local population, and in consequence necessarily extended their sphere of authority and influence.

A remarkable and well-known instance of this development of political authority arising from commercial and not political beginnings we have in the great republic of Venice ; and its extraordinarily rapid growth is partly to be attributed to the fact that from the first it was independent, and never subject to feudal domination.

Reference has already been made to the importance of the position occupied by Genoa in the history of the Riviera ; and indeed it seems to have been continually occupied in struggles for supremacy over all its neighbours. Doubtless the chief motive was jealousy of its rivals in commerce, as we may gather from the absurdly unreasonable conditions frequently imposed in moments of triumph, or punishments inflicted for supposed infractions of obligations. It will be enough to quote as an instance the case of one William Saracco of Savona (1203) who had failed to pay to the commune of Genoa a debt of 12 lire. Not only did the irate republic require the commune of Savona to pay a fine of 300 lire for allowing one of its citizens to disobey, but ordered its towers to be demolished !



**ANTIBES FROM THE WEST**







## A Backward Glance

This vindictiveness, which is locally designated firmness of character and tenacity of purpose, is far from being unknown in the twentieth century on the shores of the Mediterranean.

But besides the intimate questions arising out of commercial rivalry, there was another cause, too often forgotten in judging of the almost continuous discord between the two communes, and that is the deadly feud existing between the political factions of the Guelphs and the Ghibellines. Genoa was thoroughly Guelph in its sympathies ; while Savona, which had been rather a favourite with Imperial rulers, was as frankly Ghibelline. Genoa was by far the stronger, and usually succeeded in getting the upper hand ; but Savona, sometimes alone, sometimes assisted by one ally or another, and always a plucky little State, was continually endeavouring to throw off the hated yoke and enjoy its freedom.

Thus in 1393 Savona made an alliance with the Marchese del Carretto, a name to be remembered, as we shall frequently find it mentioned in later years ; his descendants still holding castles and lands along the Riviera. In the following year Louis of France, Duke of Orleans, who was aiming at the possession of sovereignty over Liguria, came to an arrangement with the Marchese, by which the latter was to receive a pension of 100 florins per month when Savona should be in the Duke's power. This scheme was realised in November of the same year, by means of an agreement which preserved to the inhabitants considerable rights

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and privileges as regards commerce and navigation, besides setting them free from the necessity of obeying the conditions imposed by Genoa.<sup>1</sup>

In 1421 Genoa fell into the power of Filippo Maria Visconti, Duke of Milan ; and Savona was forced to yield to the same. A few years later (1436) both communes were able to regain their liberty, and for some time they were at peace with each other, but constantly engaged in fighting against their common enemies at home and abroad. Genoa then passed successively under Charles VII. of France, and Sforza Duke of Milan ; obliging her neighbour to follow her. After various changes and further struggles both were ceded to France under the rule of Louis XII. in 1499.

The sixteenth century was a disastrous period for Savona. In 1528 it was fiercely attacked by the Genoese commanders, Filippo Fiesco and Andrea Doria, by sea as well as by land ; and after a heroic resistance, and the dissipation of all hopes of help from outside, a form of capitulation was signed which allowed the gallant governor, Moretto, to withdraw with all the honours of war, and a distinct undertaking in writing that the city should be preserved intact without injury to property or goods. As might have been expected from the well-known character of the Genoese, the solemn promise of their commanders was not worth the paper it was written upon ; and Savona was compelled to assist at the sad spectacle of her port being filled up, and her towers razed to the ground. Thus

<sup>1</sup> Bruno, *op. cit.*

## A Backward Glance

she ceased to have an independent existence ; and from that date we have only to reckon with Genoa as an important power along this portion of the Riviera.

Among the places of minor importance which in one way or another came under the dominion of Genoa was Ventimiglia. Its excellent position, and the favourable character of the neighbourhood, tempted many of the feudal lords and petty rulers to compete for its possession in the days when might was the only right ; and to escape the continual disturbances, devastations, and bloodshed to which it was subject, it had, in despair, appealed to Genoa for assistance and protection (A.D. 1140). Naturally enough, the greedy republic required a high fee for her favours ; and in return for absolute submission did not delay the establishment of a tyranny more odious and hateful than any previously endured. Peace had been purchased at too heavy a cost, and in 1221 Ventimiglia was obliged to revolt and seek anew the possession of its freedom. It was besieged ; the course of the Roya stream was deviated ; fortresses were constructed against it ; and though it held out bravely for a whole year, it was compelled at last to capitulate. Its subsequent history until the end of the eighteenth century is little more than a recital of fresh devastation, pillage, battle, and ruin,<sup>1</sup> in which its fortunes exhibited a varying ebb and flow ; while, to judge from its treatment of the neighbouring communes subject to its jurisdiction, its own virtues were none too markedly developed.

<sup>1</sup> For full details *v.* G. Rossi, *Storia di Ventimiglia*.

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Only a few miles farther west we find another district which early came under the rule of Genoa. Monaco, which can boast of being one of the very oldest Greek settlements along the coast, and well known to the Romans in their day, had its period of occupation by the Saracens, who seem to have enjoyed a firmer hold, and to have remained longer here than elsewhere. The date of their final expulsion remains uncertain, but in A.D. 1162 the Emperor Frederick I. presented the little commune to Genoa. It seems to have served chiefly as an excuse for the two Genoese factions, Guelphs and Ghibellines, represented by the families of Grimaldi and Spinola, to fight for its possession ; and as a "nest of pirates" ; this being probably the only circumstance which gave it any intrinsic value to either one or the other of the combatants. There was not only a good deal of fighting, but a deal of commerce about these transactions, and gold florins often had as much power as the sword. Fortune generally favoured the Grimaldi, though not without periods of sulkiness ; and the suzerainty of Genoa was only maintained by constant struggles. During the greater part of the sixteenth century, and some of the seventeenth, Monaco enjoyed the protection of the Kings of Spain ; but in 1641 it passed under the protection of France, whose soldiers occupied its citadel.<sup>1</sup> After having been subsequently declared French territory it once more passed into the hands of the Grimaldi family in 1814, but lost Roquebrune and Mentone in

<sup>1</sup> H. Métivier, *Monaco et ses Princes*.



OLD BRIDGE, CAGNES





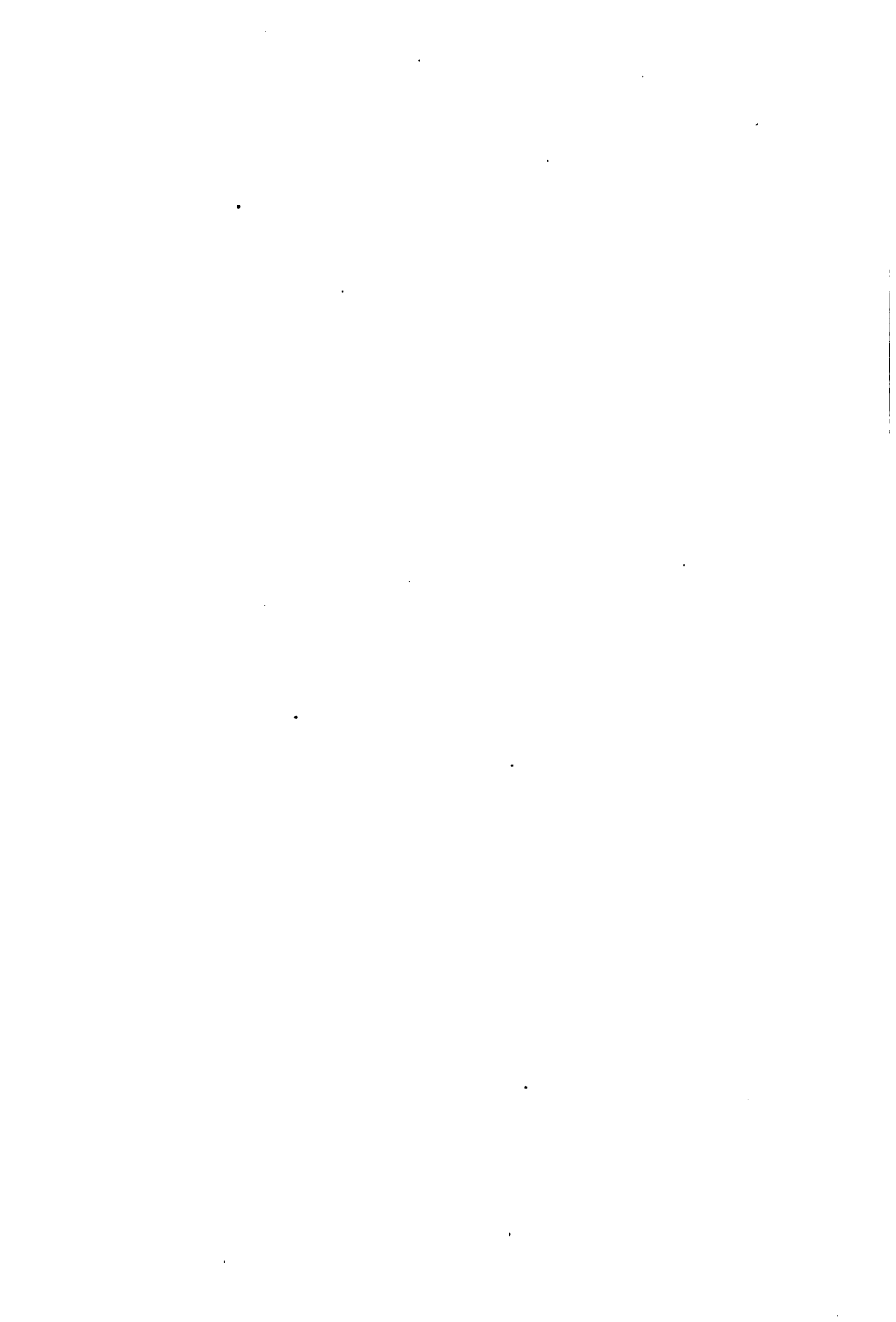
## Riviera

itself a certain discontent was manifested, the Doge and a deputation of the citizens presented themselves before the Emperor at Milan, and proclaimed themselves his subjects. Savona, so long oppressed by her merciless and unscrupulous rival and neighbour, was delighted at the change. But Napoleon's power waned, and at his downfall the Genoese States, as they had existed in 1797, were re-established for a while in consequence of a proclamation issued by the English general, W. C. Bentinck, on the 26th April 1814. In consequence of the treaties of Vienna and Paris, Liguria was united to the kingdom of Sardinia, and thus, through the changes which brought about the union of Italy, has finally and definitely become incorporated into that kingdom.

Apart from other considerations of a purely political nature, it is only fair to note that the influence of France upon the Italian Riviera was immensely beneficial towards the reawakening of its energy, and the development of its resources. The truth has been concisely expressed by Bruno in his work on Savona; and though he refers only to his native city, the same is true of other places: "... It cannot be doubted," he says, "that the real revival of Savona, both civil and economic, after these three centuries of misery and slavery, was due exclusively to the French; to their spirit of enterprise and initiative, which recalled the city to its ancient importance."<sup>1</sup>

No one who watches the developments of to-day

<sup>1</sup> Bruno, *Storia di Savona*.



CAGNES—EVENING





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can doubt that the tribute is a just one. France has grasped much more fully than its Latin neighbour the importance of the Riviera as a resort for the wealthiest of the entire world, and consequently as a source of enormous, incalculable gain. She has developed, and is to-day developing, her resources in this direction with untiring energy and clear perspicacity. She is reaping, and will continue to reap, a rich harvest from her labour. But Italy, dear dreamy Italy, with her proverbial *dolce far niente*, does nothing, less than nothing, but grab, often too greedily, at the foreigner's gold. She will not spend a centime to gain a thousand francs ; but, content with her blue skies and olive-clad shores, lies still with outstretched hand to receive the gifts that Fate may send her. It is in no spirit of disloyalty to her, no want of love for her, that we echo what some of her more energetic sons are saying openly to-day, "What would be the state of our Riviera if it were but under the direction of France ?" Again and again it is asked ; and the answer can but be that the gain would be enormous, the improvement almost inconceivable. Her shores are as lovely, her air as pure, her skies as blue, and her soil as fertile. The strangers who come to her bring with them a love already strong, created and fed by the traditions of her glorious past, which they have learned from their childhood ; a love which France, with all its splendour, its genius, and its history, has never been able to arouse. And yet in spite of all her advantages, Italy does but the barest fraction of what France does to gain or keep

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their esteem. Where is there in the whole of the Italian Riviera a single work which can for one moment be mentioned alongside the Promenade des Anglais or the Promenade de la Croisette? The splendid Boulevard du Midi at Cannes might easily have a superb and indisputable equal from the Capo Sant Ampeglio to Ventimiglia, and at far less cost. The broken line of the Esterelles has its pendant, its counterpart, its rival, in the graceful undulations of the blue mountains behind Monaco and Mentone, as seen from Bordighera. But not a sou will Italy spend, not a day's work will she furnish, to give the world a new chance of appreciating her marvellous natural advantages in this direction.



*Escarène.*



*Beaulieu.*

## CHAPTER III

### SOME PEOPLE ONE MEETS

It is a motley and cosmopolitan crowd that gathers yearly on the shores of the Mediterranean, and fills the streets of its chief winter cities. The wealth, the beauty, the leaders, and the idlers of the Old World and the New jostle each other, sometimes literally and not too lightly, under the blue skies, on the broad promenades, and in the gambling-rooms of the Riviera. We meet priests, pedants, and politicians, royalties and rowdies, misery and madness, gamblers and gourmands, as well as frumps and flirts of varying ages and conditions. Around us are sportsmen and speculators, spies and swindlers, the splendid strength of athletic manhood, the masterful energy of superb intellect, the fairest flowers of a pure and noble womanhood, the shame-fullest grades of a painted and bespangled degradation.

The gayest, proudest, richest portion of this mass of fluttering humanity swarms on the French Riviera, the *Côte d'Azur*, flaunts its butterfly wings in the sunshine, or scorches them at its glaring gas-jets.

Across the frontier, on the Italian side, gathers the



## Riviera

rest of the crowd ; less gay, less distinguished, less luxurious ; for Italy has no rival to Nice or Monte, has not yet seized her opportunities, has not cleverly exploited her charms, nor placed her jewels in an attractive setting. She has the same wondrous glamour of purple hills, palm-gardens, and sapphire sea ; she has a still more wondrous and impassioned past ; but she is ages behind her smarter and more active rival in bidding for, and winning to herself, the wealth of foreign wanderers.

The period is past when the Riviera was—rightly or wrongly—considered mainly as the resort of invalids seeking to prop up for a brief space their already undermined existence. By far the larger part of these sufferers had contracted the fell scourge of consumption, and Mentone was their chosen headquarters, especially in the worst cases. Many causes have co-operated to reduce the number of these visitors ; and a recent French writer asserts, half playfully, half seriously, that nowadays, if a hotel visitor is heard to cough, a deputation of the other visitors immediately waits upon the proprietor to complain, and the unfortunate individual has to pack his trunks and seek accommodation elsewhere. The increase of specially constructed and specially conducted “Sanatoria,” based upon the most modern theories of medical science with regard to the treatment of phthisical patients, has diminished the number of such cases to be found in the ordinary hotels ; but we may still find victims who do not realise their danger, and can hardly be restrained from the most



A STREET CORNER, CAGNES





## Some People One Meets

unwise attempts to emulate the exertions of their healthy rivals and companions.

Alas! the sick and the suffering, like the poor, are "always with us," and they pass and repass in their wheeled chairs or lounges, leaning on the strong arm of a friend or nurse, or patiently pacing alone by the aid of a stick. There is the dainty, pallid little sufferer, barely able to walk a score of yards unless supported; with the hacking cough, the hectic flush, and the firm conviction that "it's a mere nothing; she'll be all right soon." Her doctor and her nurse, if she can afford one, know better. There is really no hope; and each day sees the growing weakness, the wasting of decay, till the tired limbs can lift themselves no longer from the couch. At last the heart-beats grow feebler, until they fail altogether under the strain of that wearing cough. Then another faded flower is borne away to the quiet graveyard on the hillside towards the setting sun, where the cypress and the ilex keep watch and ward over the stranger's rest. She came too late to these sunny Southern shores. A couple of years sooner, and the soft balmy air might have healed the sickening lungs, and spared the frail existence for a long and happy time. She will wander no more on the sweet hillside where the peach-blossoms bloom by millions in the days of the earliest spring-time, and the nightingale sings through the long summer hours. But the roses will flourish all the year long for her sake, and her lover's tears will moisten the violets above her little grave.

Half a century ago the visitors other than invalids

## Riviera

were limited to some of the more wealthy among the leisured classes, who were content to avoid for a time the attractions of ordinary society at home. Nowadays the Riviera is the happy hunting-ground of thousands who merely seek amusement and excitement combined with sunshine, cheerfulness, and a mild delicious climate. They are not ill, or even in danger of illness; but a dislike to cold, and to persistent bad weather, suggests the desirability of "going South" when winter storms prevail, and their means permit the indulgence of their tastes. The usual tone of these crowds is perhaps one of gaiety, or at least amusement; though, to a patient listener, scarce a note is wanting of the whole gamut of humanity's emotions, its joys, its griefs, and its pain.

Where Nature is so lovely, it is not strange that—especially among new-comers—there should be some with an almost enthusiastic appreciation; though the experienced *habitué* takes his pleasures as calmly, not to say as stolidly, on the Croisette or the Promenade des Anglais, as in Bond Street or "The Row."

A few perverse individuals we shall meet who exhibit a cynical satisfaction—one might say a savage delight—in finding fault; pointing out a snake in the Eden, a rift in the lute, a mote in the sunshine. They are never satisfied, see no beauty around them, and even mistake beauty for ugliness.

Does an occasional dull day make its appearance, at once they say, in a tone of unutterable contempt, "Is *this* your Riviera sunshine?"

Does a shower fall after weeks of cloudless skies,

## Some People One Meets

immediately they grumble, "How horrid! We might as well be in England!"

Does a fresh breeze blow from the sea, "What a nuisance! I wish I were back at home!"

Show them the remains of some great monument of antiquity, hoary with the passage of the ages, majestic even in its decay, "Stupid heaps of ruins!" is all they can perceive.

Lead them along the hillside to a rarely picturesque village nestling in its vineyards or among its olive groves; with its fountains of pure fresh water always sparkling, and its tidy narrow streets where the old women spin in the shadow of their doorways as their grandmothers did before them, "What a *dirty* place to live in! Ugh!"

If the weather be warm, "It's *frightfully* hot!" If the day be cool, "It's *beastly* cold!" There is no satisfying these grumblers. They should stay in their own dull dens, and not come to the Riviera to be a nuisance to their neighbours.

One may gather an idea of pleasant associations from the frequent announcements found in our "Society Journals" that "the honeymoon will be spent on the Riviera." In reality the number of evidently blissful couples one meets everywhere, in every stage of shyness, resignation, or elation, might almost suggest an earthly paradise if there were no graver figures in the picture to claim our attention.

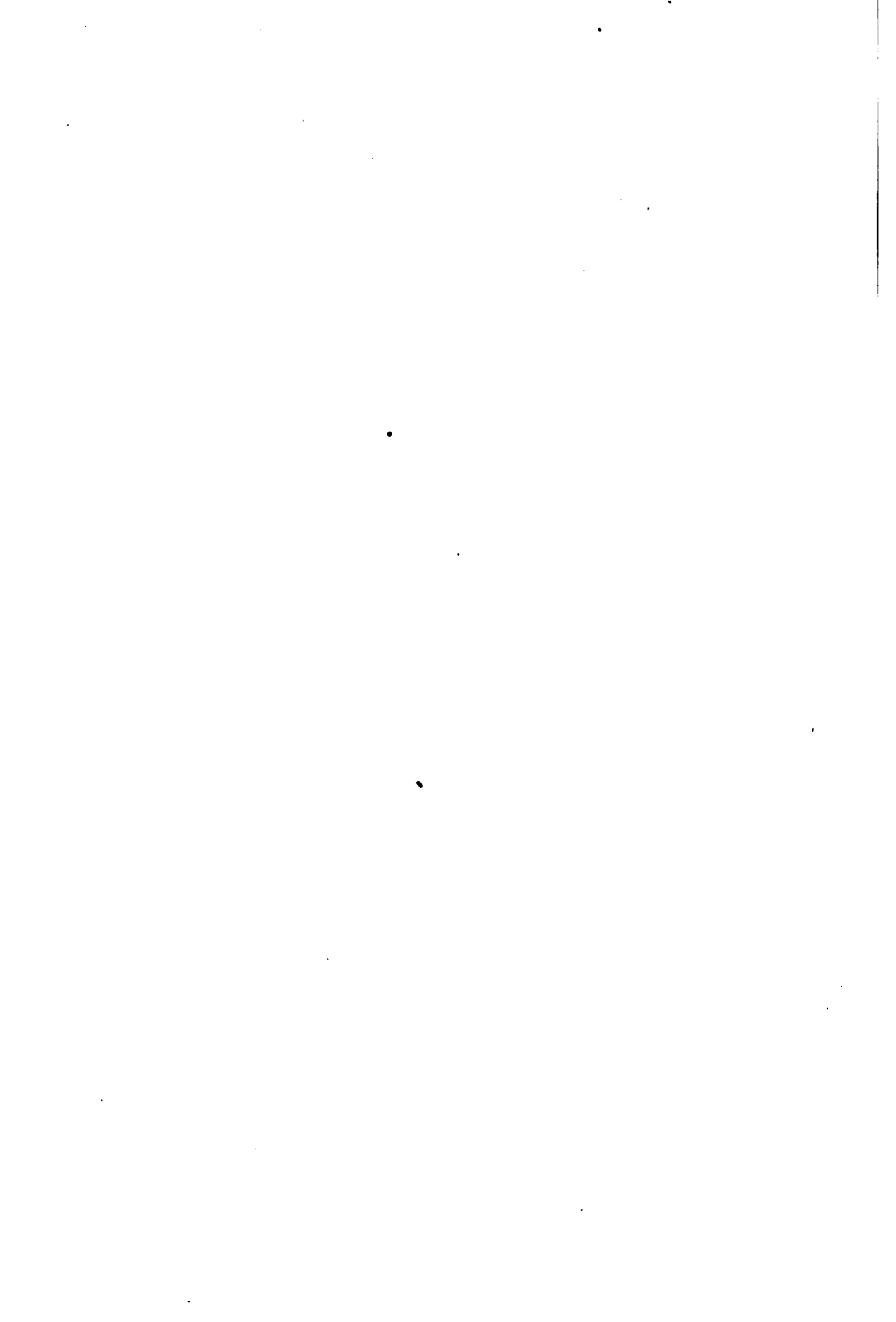
Nor are our compatriots by any means the only exponents of the game. Indeed, though it used to be



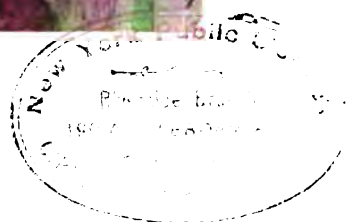
## Riviera

said that "marriages are made in heaven," it is evident that nowadays they are largely, if not chiefly, "made in Germany," to judge by the enormous number of travelling couples entirely devoted to each other, and quite oblivious of the rest of the world, but who do their lovemaking in the language of the Fatherland. If you have ever enjoyed (?) the experience of a long railway journey, let us say from Ventimiglia to Genoa, in the company of one of these happy couples, you will have gained such an insight into a bewildering variety of caresses, blandishments, and endearing attentions as to form in itself an excellent preliminary phase of education for married life. But follow the *sposi* to the hotel *table d'hôte*, and if you are fortunate enough (or unfortunate enough, according to your point of view) to sit opposite them, it will be demonstrated to you that the old teaching that man cannot do two things at once is now an exploded superstition, and quite unworthy of the age in which we live. You may see how the bridegroom with one hand lovingly embraces his yielding spouse, while with the other he is diligently shovelling peas into his mouth with a knife! An hour later there will probably be visible on the floor of the balcony outside their window, or perchance on an opposite wall, a melting "shadow-dance" which will give your risible faculties abundant play for some time. *Honi soit qui mal y pense!*

Another numerous class of visitors is composed of those elderly ladies and gentlemen who have gone through life without knowing the bliss or the pain of



THE VEGETABLE MARKET, NICE, LOOKING WEST



## Riviera

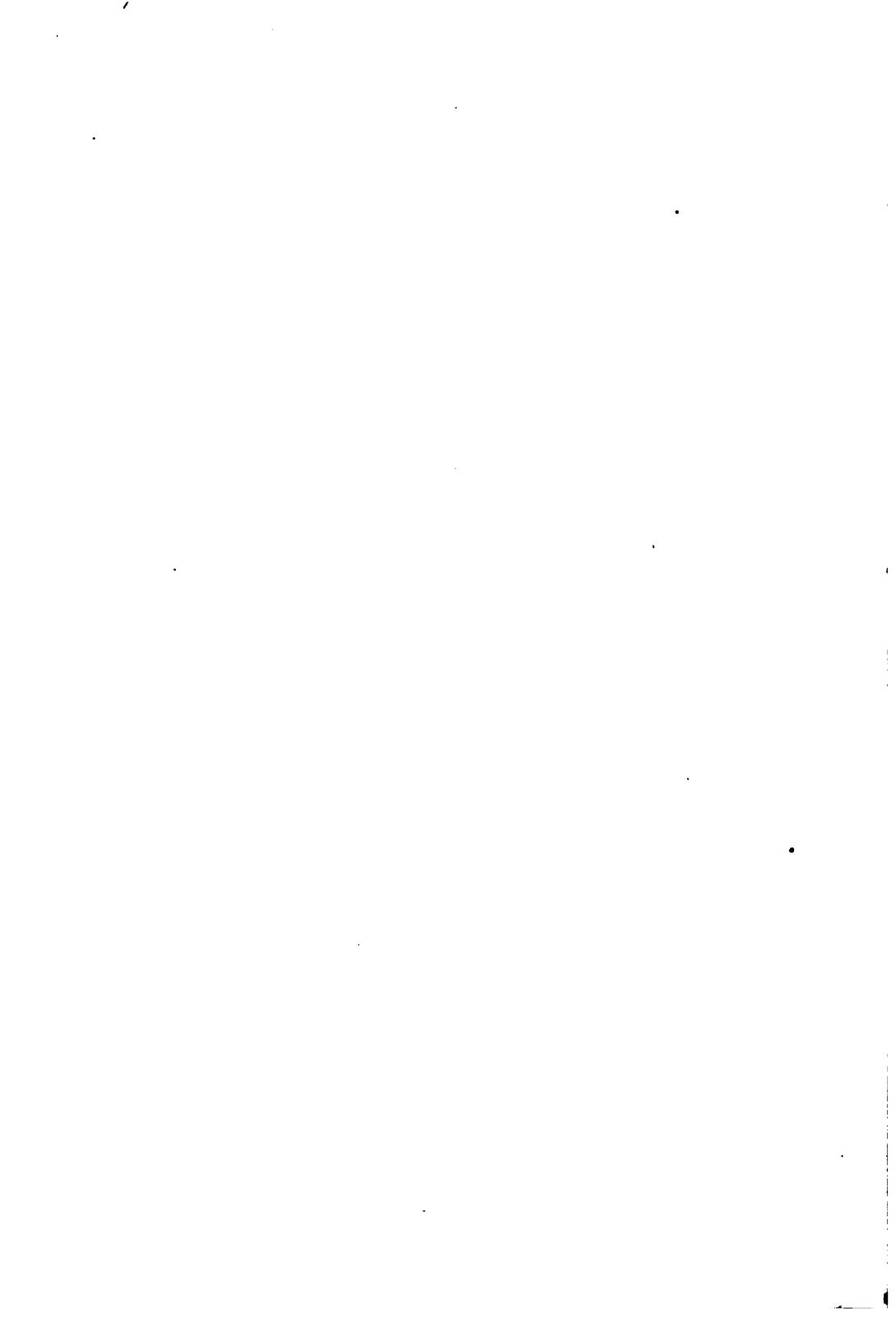
beats under his rugged and worn exterior. He will welcome our company with kindly polished phrases, and, with perhaps a touch of exquisite melancholy, he will confess, "You know, there's a sort of solitariness when you're by yourself."

Go and see him often. Never mind if his religious views have grown narrow and restricted, and if, in a moment of expansive confidence, he presses them upon you with unthinking insistence. He means well; and he cannot remedy the "twist" which has prevented him from seeking truth with wider-opened eyes.

Dear old fellow! May he long live to enjoy the sunshine and the flowers of our gay Riviera spring-time, and cherish the buried secret, the ever-living memory of the light that went out of his life and made it lonely when *she* left him so long ago.

Then our sisters, too, of this class are perhaps more exacting. They insist on having the sunniest rooms and the very lowest pension price in the hotels; give more trouble to the servants than the most extravagant travellers; "never take wine"—out of which the hotel proprietor looks to make his largest profits—and usually drink hot water with their meals. Their tea they always brew in their own rooms, surreptitiously carrying off sugar and butter from the breakfast-table for their afternoon repast. They are not always charitable in their judgments upon their neighbours, and have been known to destroy other people's reputations with the sublimest indifference to facts.

But among them one finds now and then a real live



THE VEGETABLE MARKET, NICE, LOOKING SOUTH







## Some People One Meets

angel—without wings, of course, for these have gone out of fashion—but clad in a garb of pity for all misfortune and distress. We see one who knows what suffering is, for she has suffered, and is ever ready to help, for she has had need of help, and has learned how tardy is its coming. Gentle is her touch and soft her footstep in the sick-chamber ; and comforting are the words of hope she will whisper to the stricken invalid.

But she is not a favourite with her sisters, for she never talks scandal, or minds another person's business beyond lending a helping hand. When they rudely reprove her for "neglecting the ordinances of religion," they never take the trouble to ascertain that while they were muttering their prayers in church, with their eyes on their neighbours' hats or frocks, she was bending over the bed of a helpless sufferer in efforts to alleviate pain ; was tending the neglected children ; or preparing some simple meal from her own scanty store, for the patient's sustenance and comfort.

A famous lady writer and leader of fashion has told us—and she ought to know—that "a woman desirous of dressing to perfection should be in absolute harmony with her surroundings." Some of those we meet on the Riviera scarcely trouble to act upon this sage advice, but allow themselves the luxury of wearing a costume simply because it is beautiful, or they think so, and then wonder that they are remarked upon. You may find instances everywhere ; but if you pay attention at, let us say, Rumpelmayer's during the time of afternoon tea, you may see some tall, fair, handsome woman, with "lady"

## Riviera

writ on every line and feature, with golden hair and a charming but remarkable costume. When she leaves the place, she will, as the door closes behind her, say to the gentleman who is accompanying her, "*Did* you see how those people stared?" Then if he does not at once take up his cue and express sympathy or indignation, she will go on: "When I am *old* enough" (a pause, to mark that such a date is yet far distant, as indeed we may see for ourselves)—"when I am *old* enough, I shall be able to say '*No* woman, *certainly*, was ever looked at as much as *I* was!'"

Society willingly acknowledges the debt it owes—and cannot pay—to the brilliance and charm which have been brought into it by our beautiful and accomplished cousins from across the Atlantic; and rarely do the best of them appear to greater advantage than on the Riviera, in the whirl of its gay cosmopolitan circle.

Some of the cruder examples, who have not yet got their European bearings, are delightfully naïve and quaint. For instance, there was the pretty dark girl, only just arrived on her first trip to Europe, who joined our party at the hotel breakfast-table one morning. Some of us had already the pleasure of her acquaintance, so that very soon we were all at ease, and conversation flowed freely, though "Mamma" was too tired to appear. It was evident that there was no lack of dollars in the young lady's purse, and that she possessed to the full that delightful sense of power given by an ability to "pay" under all circumstances; and conse-

## Some People One Meets

quently had a right to exact the best of everything in return for ready cash. It was also evident that something—perhaps the weather, the wind, the kitchen fire, or her own appetite—was not in perfect working order that morning, for we were soon treated to some criticism of the material provided for our repast.

Pushing away her cup and tilting her pretty nose in the air, she said with a strong accent: "That's second-class coffee. They just get over you like that. They give you two cents o' bread and second-class coffee. I can't stand it. I'm very finikin about coffee."

The waiter was desired to bring cocoa instead of the defective and rejected beverage previously supplied, and we continued our exchange of notes as to recent experiences. It soon appeared that most of us would have to take a back seat, for what could Europe offer in comparison with the wonders of the Western world? Even the much-travelled German professor, who, calmly ignoring the stolid and rather uninteresting *Frau* by his side, was feasting his eyes in unconcealed admiration on the young American's face, could only murmur monosyllables, and interject notes of admiration.

"We've been staying six weeks at the —— Hotel in San Francisco. That's just one of the most expensive hotels in America. It's just first class. You pay nine dollars a day just for a room in the season. But it's first class."

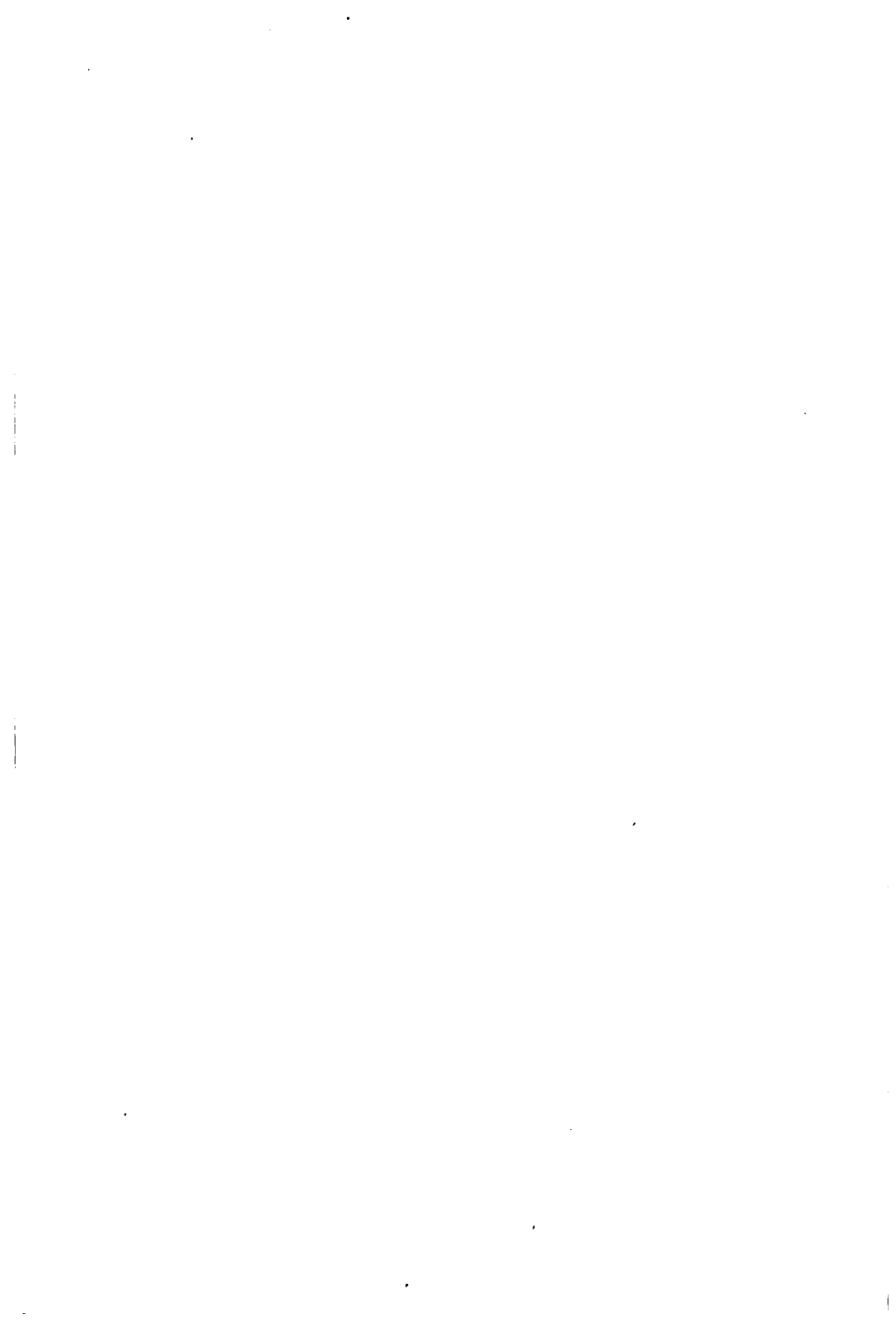
There was no doubt about it. We were entertaining—or being entertained by—an angel, though no

## Riviera

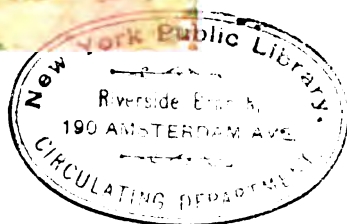
longer "unawares," or a very superior being from another sphere; and we were painfully conscious that the surroundings, to say nothing of ourselves, were not equal to the occasion. In the meantime the waiter had executed his order, but he must have drawn his supplies from some other regions than those to which our friend belonged, for she broke in upon somebody's glowing description of a famous scene in the neighbourhood with, "Oh, this cocoa's horrid! I don't know what it's made with, but it's second class! I should think it's just boiled with water."

Somehow the women at the table, with that cynical indifference to another woman's suffering which they are said to sometimes exhibit, remained unmoved; but the men felt that something desperate would have to be done. A timid and half-irresolute suggestion that perhaps the resources of the establishment might not be entirely exhausted, only evoked the crushing rejoinder, "Oh, they bring me tea sometimes, but I don't like tea. I think it's wash only fit for pigs."

As none of us could supply our friend with the "sharp sauce" which hunger is said to furnish, we had perforce to content ourselves with finishing our own meals as best we could, but the conversation never flagged, and after a while began to take an even more personal turn. Family characteristics came under discussion. "I'm like my father and my grandmother," said the maiden, as her hand touched the enormous roll of hair over her forehead: "I'm not like Momma. Grandmother had a low forehead; I've a low forehead."



A CORNER NEAR THE MARKET, NICE







## Some People One Meets

Momma's got a high forehead. I've got Poppa's eyes. Oh, he's such a handsome man! He looks like an actor. I wish you could see Poppa. He's a second Nat Goodwin. When we were at the —— Hotel, and walked up and down, they gave it out I was engaged to him, he looked so young. They said I was engaged to my own father."

We could well believe it, indeed would have believed the wildest tales of sea-serpents or other wonders, had she only told us in that delightful way of hers. But she went on, as if the subject were inexhaustible: "Did Momma show you Poppa's picture? Oh, he's so handsome! I tell you he's a second Nat Goodwin. He's got such beautiful teeth, too, and he's got such eyes, such a lot of the devil in 'em too. Golly, but he's such a devil 's Poppa!"

In a momentary pause of this breathless eloquence the polite German feelingly observed that he would much like to see her father's portrait if he were anything like his daughter; but she modestly replied: "Oh, don't look at me, I'm a fright now. I did look well a year ago, I did. I hate travelling; it makes you so thin. I'm not thin in the face yet; I'm round yet"; and she gently caressed her cheeks and chin.

The conquest was complete; and two of us who knew the country well, braving the threatening looks on the faces of the others, accepted a polite invitation to complete a party of four for an excursion into the neighbourhood. A carriage was to be engaged. She again called the waiter. "Can we have a carriage for

## Riviera

four to sit comfortable, but real comfortable, else Momma won't go."

"What's that about the tariff?"

"Oh, I guess they won't charge us by the tariff! We don't want a carriage by the tariff."

The excursion was an unmistakable success, and, having interested "Momma" in "the other fellow," the young lady made herself delightfully agreeable. But, as R. K. would say, "that's quite another story."

The cosmopolitan character of the Riviera crowds is marked more strongly among the upper strata than among the middle and lower. Royalties and ex-royalties from most of the courts of Europe come here to take their ease, like more ordinary mortals, leaving behind them for the moment some of the cares of State or burdens of responsibility.

No sadder, nobler, or more pathetic figure was ever seen than that of the ex-Empress Eugénie, whose favourite villa stands on Cap Martin, close to Mentone; and who lives in the strictest retirement, alone and almost unnoticed, in a tiny corner of that France over which she once held such brilliant sway.

And there was formerly that other figure of the martyred Empress of Austria whose tragic end sent a thrill of horror through all the civilised world. Here she, too, loved to seek, in the quiet of the pine woods and the murmur of the sea, the rest denied her in Imperial palaces and the intricate labyrinth of Court intrigue.

Here, also, did our own beloved Queen Victoria, of

## Some People One Meets

blessed memory, pass many pleasant hours, though Her Majesty's tremendous energy and faithful devotion to the interests of her people never allowed her to separate herself from daily contact with the business portion of a ruler's destiny and duty.

After the royalties themselves, come crowds of those born or bred near the throne, or drawing distinction from the fount of honour. Endless Grand Dukes, Princes, and nobles, of all imaginable nations, of every possible degree and quite impossible *nuances* of precedence; from the purest blue blood of the *ancien régime*, with traditions stretching far away back to the unexplored mists of antiquity, down to the latest cotton lord or political trickster, who buys his "ancestors" as he used to buy his stock-in-trade, and with just as keen an eye to "biz."

This last is perhaps one of the most amusing figures ever met. He and his family are of course always found in the most expensive hotels, where the "biggest" names are seen on the visitors' lists. Both he and his good lady—the whilom cook or even "general" of a quarter of a century ago—have been steadily acquiring—together with the rather obvious tendency to *embon-point*—a collection of little airs and graces supposed to be characteristic of the real nobility, and something which is made to do duty for dignity, though some have been known to call it by the vulgar name of pomposity. To do them justice, they are not unfrequently genial—in their way—and, in default of higher game, will make themselves agreeable enough to strangers of an uncertain

## Riviera

position who may possibly turn out to be "swells." The leisure from trade occupations has been given to a sort of self-education, often seen in facetious sallies and heavy humour, which their fellow-travellers are at liberty to enjoy free of cost. Knight and Dame are enjoying—let us say—a trip from Mentone to Nice, to witness some of the festivities there.

"How much greener the country is about here than it is at Mentone," says the Dame.

"Yes, my dear," replies the newly honoured, "it's greener because there's more verdure."

The daughter, who is also looking out of the carriage window at the landscape whirling by, has caught sight of some of those hideous advertisements, in gigantic characters, of the well-known business establishment in the Avenue de la Gare, dedicated *à la Ménagère*.

"Oh, they've got a menagerie here, Mamma! We must go and see that," says the young girl, whose French has hardly got beyond the average boarding-school stage, but will rapidly improve as she gains more experience.

But the multitudinous middle class, which has had neither time nor inclination (perhaps not even the ability) to dedicate to the study of foreign languages, often furnishes the largest amount of amusement to observers. It is seldom shy of making use of the elementary acquaintance it has obtained; and is entirely oblivious of, or quite indifferent to, the weird effect produced upon neighbours. Some of our friends of this class never seem to remember that if they are not

## Some People One Meets

quite sure of their French, for instance, they need not call out to the waiter, in a voice loud enough to be heard by all the other guests in the restaurant, when they want apple sauce to eat with their roast pork :—

“Avez voo òone pòm? May-èè pâr pòm de taire : pòm froo-èè : may-ee rotèè? Toujours en Angleterre pòm rotèè avec porc.”

Some fail to understand what is said to them, and blunder in consequence. Of these was the Transatlantic visitor at the hotel breakfast-table, when the following conversation was overheard :—

“Waiter, I want an egg, please.”

“Oui, Madame.”

“A boiled egg.”

“Oui, Madame, un œuf à la coque.”

“What’s he say? A cock’s egg? No, of course I want a hen’s egg. We only eat hen’s eggs in our country.”

Others, equally unfortunate, fail to make themselves understood for want of even a very elementary acquaintance with the language of the country they are visiting. At one of the caffès on the Italian Riviera there arrived a German gentleman with his wife and two children. They ordered coffee without any difficulty, the one word being sufficient, and having practically the same sound in both countries. However, when the coffee had been served, a difficulty arose, for the visitors desired milk with it; but they could only ejaculate “Milch, Milch,” which conveyed nothing to the mind of the untravelled Italian waiter.

## Riviera

Being a bit of an artist—shall we say?—or at least a draughtsman, the gentleman took pencil and paper, and drew a side elevation of a cow. Pointing to the rather swollen udder, he repeated the word “Milch.” “Ho capito, I understand,” said the waiter, and rushed away to execute the order. He seemed to be rather a long time about it, and the coffee was getting decidedly cool, when he suddenly appeared with an imposing tray, and set before the astonished family *four hot beefsteaks!*

A charming lady of our acquaintance once placed her blushing companion in an awkward position by saying with a smile to a handsome shopkeeper with whom she was uselessly bargaining for an article she wished to purchase, but for which he was demanding at least double its fair price, “You’re a molto caro omo!” After that frank declaration of her opinion what could he do but consent to accept a slight reduction in his pretensions, in the hope of a future gain which should ultimately compensate him fully?

Calling at her apartment one day with the object of paying her a visit, and being told by the housemaid that the Signora was at home, it was rather embarrassing to hear her call in a loud voice down the staircase, “Maria! Maria! niente in casa!”

But the climax came when she was compelled to discharge the cook for some serious misdemeanour. It was done—she herself afterwards told us—in these words: “You go via my casa this momento! You’re compagno to a ladro!”

How many of our compatriots, both men and

## Some People One Meets

women, seem to leave at home most of their politeness when they come abroad. Foreign residents on the Riviera are quite aware, by a series of unpleasant experiences, that offers of assistance to a fellow-countryman, however delicately proffered, are usually repulsed with surpassing and offensive rudeness.

A single typical instance will suffice, though it could be reproduced in duplicate by the score. A well-known English gentleman who speaks Italian perfectly, having been born and educated in the country, was present at an unpleasant scene between another Englishman—presumably a gentleman—and his Italian cab-driver. The latter was making an extortionate charge, and enforcing it with most offensive expressions, while his fare knew very little of any language but his own. The first-named Englishman stepped into the road, politely raised his hat and said gently, "Excuse me! Can I be of any assistance to you, as I speak Italian and know the ways of the place?"

The only reply, delivered in the most insolent manner, was, "Just mind your own business, will you!"

Another well-known—alas! far too well-known—type is that of the "bounder," 'Arry of the Riviera, with his loud clothing, gaudy ties, "flash" jewellery, and demonstrative manner. He is not unfrequently accompanied, as a foil, perhaps, by some quiet, modest, inoffensive fellow, who is beholden to him in some inexplicable way, and cannot shake off the incubus, but has to be his slave, to fetch and carry like a dog, and



## Riviera

remain silent under insolent rebuffs. 'Arry has usually been—or pretends to have been—"something in the City," on the Stock or Corn Exchange ; gives himself the airs of a millionaire ; is prominent at public entertainments, carnival balls, tennis tournaments, or the like. One seldom sees him with any lady worth the name, or only for a very brief period of probation, unsatisfactory in its results so far as he is concerned ; but if by mischance you should be thrown into his company you will find that his talk is largely of Lord "This," and Lady "That," or the Duke of "So and so," whom he was with—he says—at Homburg, or Biarritz, or Cairo. There is always more than a dash of vulgar scandal in his conversation, and the freedom with which he will mention well-known names, and suggest that their owners are, after all, very disreputable people, stamps his own true character on him at once.

His habit is to have a small apartment for the season in one of the quieter and consequently cheaper places on the Riviera, and be periodically seen in all his peacock glory at Monte, Nice, or Mentone. Beware of him ! He will clap you familiarly on the shoulder after an hour's acquaintance ; profess to be your friend for life ; make a show of sympathising with you if you happen to be ill or in trouble ; and turn against you like a snake if he sees that you are not *pane per i suoi denti*, in other words, if there is nothing to be got out of you, or if you are too independent to attach yourself to him as a satellite, and pander to his self-conceit. In reality he is mean beyond descrip-



**CHURCH OF S. PONS, NICE**





## Some People One Meets

tion, keeps a minute register of all his little favours, reminds their recipients of them quite shamelessly, is not above demanding a liberal *quid pro quo* in no uncertain manner, and grudges his poor, patient follower the centimes for his cigarettes or an occasional tram. He will say with a sneer, "Lazy boy! You ought to have walked," though the errand has been for himself and his convenience. His type is widespread, and he is "various" in his specimens; but as a rule he is always just about to purchase a large property, or build a fine villa, somewhere or other on the Riviera; and all the land agents and builders round have been pestered with his inquiries. But the business is never concluded, and each succeeding year sees our 'Arry in the same modest lodgings, saving up for a week or two now and then of gay excitement and display in the larger towns.

There are many of the "light-fingered gentry" to be met with on the Riviera, usually very well dressed, irreproachable in bearing, and "doing themselves very well" at comfortable hotels. The corridors of the trains, or the crush at the principal railway stations will give them an opportunity for a push against some unsuspecting traveller, followed sometimes by a courteous apology to disarm suspicion, at other times by a pretended angry protest, often by no remark at all, as if it were a matter of no importance; and it is only a while later that the victim misses his purse or his watch, and remembers the incident. Women, too, are clever pick-pockets, and less likely to be suspected than men, especially among their own sex.

## Riviera

These people are watched to a limited extent, and occasionally we may see a resolute-looking individual, who is in reality a detective from London or Paris, who, having "spotted" a well-known member of the thieving fraternity, touches him lightly on the arm, and, calling him by his real name, suggests that his presence is not desired here, and that he had better make himself scarce. The warning seldom goes unheeded, at least for a time, and the scene of operations is changed.

Monte Carlo is a favourite rendezvous or hunting-ground for persons of the elegant thieving class, but none of the principal resorts are free from the plague.

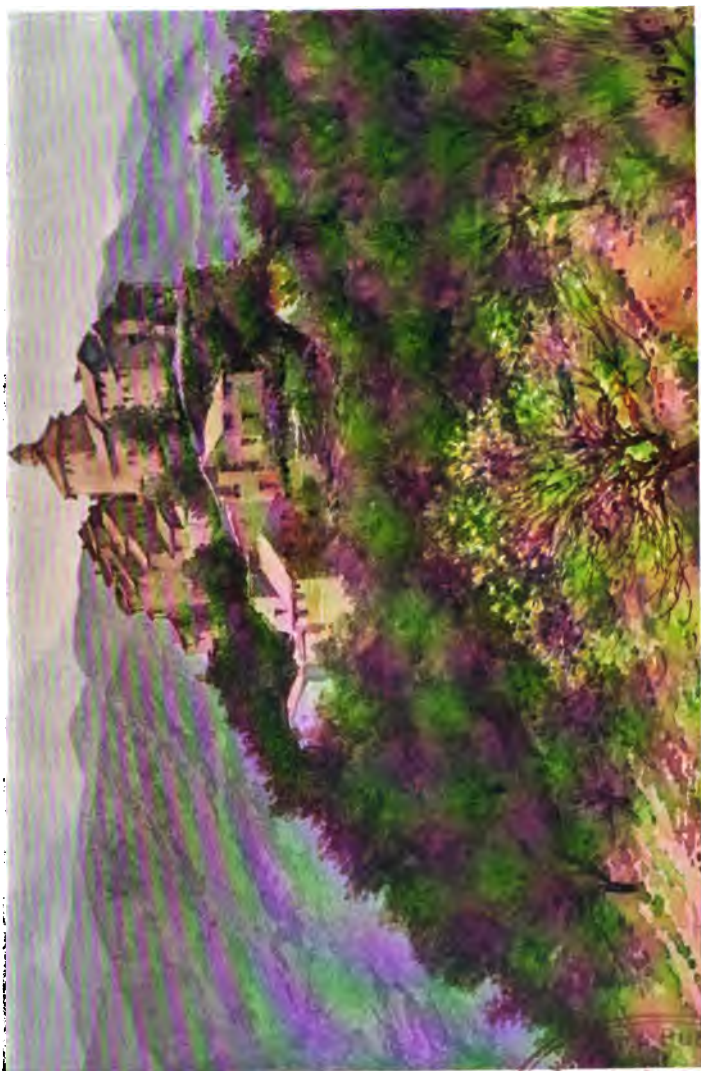
There is another pestilence, not usually spoken of, but which many men have had good reason to regret, and is not repressed as it should be. This is the habit prevailing among a certain class of objectionable women of travelling up and down the line, taking care to get into those carriages where they find a man alone, and then demanding blackmail as the price of silence. They threaten a false accusation in case of refusal. Unfortunately they find too many individuals among the *personnel* of the railways, and others who ought to know better, willing to aid them in their nefarious designs. Many an honest and virtuous man has felt compelled to pay up rather than risk a possible suspicion on the part of those whose good opinion he values, to say nothing of the impossibility of proving a negative in the midst of the publicity of a law-court.

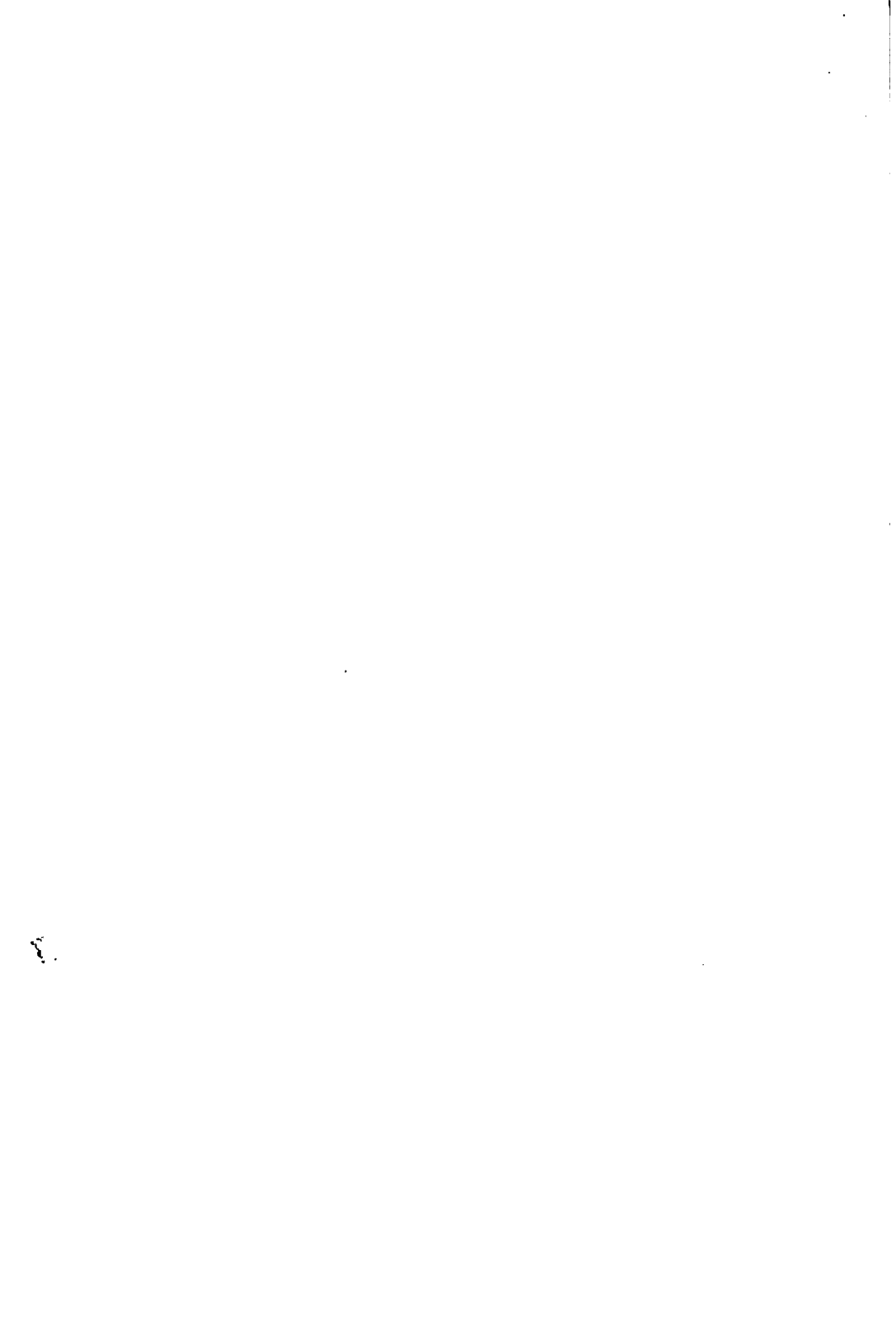
A few years ago it might have been advisable to include the enthusiastic motorist among the people one





**LA ROQUETTE, IN THE VAR VALLEY**





## Some People One Meets

meets. Nowadays it is rapidly becoming a fact that there is scarcely any one else to be seen. As some one who ought to know has said: "On the roads to-day there is only one place endurable, and that is *in* the motor. All the rest is dust and bad language."



*Eze.*



*Old Well, Bordighera.*

## CHAPTER IV

### CULINARY CHIT-CHAT

WHILE the chief attractions, influences, and objects for which visitors come to the Riviera are external, outside of themselves, it is not possible to ignore altogether the claims of the "inner man" to some sort of consideration. Indeed, this same personage is apt to make his complaints in a manner which does not permit of being ignored, if we unwisely attempt to ride roughshod over his feelings. It matters nothing if we endeavour to subdue threatened disturbances, and soothe ruffled appetites, by delicately adopting a name suggesting the gentler sex. Even "Little Mary" imperiously demands our attention and will not be denied. Now as our medical advisers tell us that a large proportion of our ailments—in other words, a considerable part of that which gives them work and makes them rich—results from carelessness or indiscretion in this direction, it is clear that to ignore the question of food and drink

## Culinary Chit-Chat

when we come South is far from being a praiseworthy proceeding. Feed we must, or well or ill, if not for pleasure, at least to keep ourselves alive, and if possible avoid unpleasant consequences from unsuitable food.

Some there are so fortunate, so brave, or so devoid of taste, that nothing comes amiss; the poorest food suffices; the richest seems to do them no harm, and never gives any sensations of special pleasure. But there are others, delicate, fastidious, or dyspeptic, who find one of the greatest difficulties in their lives to consist in the impossibility of always obtaining suitable and at the same time agreeable food.

The evolution of the *menu* is going on so slowly that the modern movement in favour of greater simplicity, combined with more scientific preparation of viands, cannot be said to be widely extended, if we consider the principal restaurants of Europe, or the *cuisine* of the great Continental hotels. Doubtless those responsible consider they are meeting the wishes of the larger number of their patrons, but the fact remains that the average hotel *table d'hôte* leaves something to be desired. The type adopted years ago, when different modes of thought on the subject prevailed, is still followed, if not blindly, at least steadily; with the result that those who are condemned to seat themselves day after day for months at the same hour, at the same table, complain of a monotony which becomes appallingly wearisome, even when the individual culinary performances may not be in themselves deserving of blame.

The problem before hotel caterers is confessedly

## Riviera

by no means a simple one, nor is it to be supposed that if a reasonable reform were shown to be possible (and that means consistent with their reasonable profits), they would decline to adopt it. Indeed, the inevitable law of supply and demand would probably soon settle the matter for them. But they, too, have to reckon with the difficulty created by the fact that many of their clients are quite impossible of contentment ; don't know what they do want ; and would not be satisfied if they found placed before them a veritable "food for the gods." The most we can do at present is to indicate certain facts ; and trust that consideration, discussion, and an all-round readiness for compromise, may in time enable us to realise a certain improvement.

Some few of these facts we may venture to suggest.

A large number of travellers are not satisfied with things as they are, and would cordially welcome a reform. This reform should take the direction of greater variety, and at the same time greater simplicity, without any loss of artistic or nutritive excellence. No desire is felt to diminish the hotel-keeper's legitimate profits, to induce him to undertake a larger expenditure, or make more elaborate arrangements ; indeed, there is every probability that an improved system would result in a saving on his expenses, without any sacrifice of comfort to his clients. Stated crudely, the weakness of the present system consists in practically treating all visitors as having the same appetites, the same capacities, the same requirements, the same tastes, at the same hour every day ; or, in

## Culinary Chit-Chat

other words, like a row of exactly equal furnaces, to be daily stoked with the same allowance of fuel.

Of course there are inevitable difficulties in the way of realising any reform, however desirable ; and the first arises from those disagreeable individuals, to be found in all classes, who, the moment any improvement is suggested, jump to the conviction that they are perfectly satisfied with things as they are, though they may have always been among the most persistent grumblers. We have all met persons of this description ; and they have to be reckoned with, because they invariably act as a clog on the wheels of reform.

The second difficulty is to suggest a definite and detailed reform which should meet with a sufficiently general approval among travellers to make it desirable to hotel-keepers as an experiment, while at the same time recommending itself to them for its practicability. After all, they are but human, and cannot be expected to work miracles ; though in the perfect functioning of some of their palatial establishments they may be said to go as near to it as any class of caterers for public patronage.

We may almost dismiss as unimportant the difficulty of convincing the hotel-keepers themselves, as a class, that the reform is desirable, for the simple reason that their interests depend upon the satisfaction of their clients ; and that the all-pervading rivalry of the present day would probably be sufficient to make the first gap in any wall of opposition.

Already the thin end of the wedge has been



## Riviera

introduced, if unconsciously, in those instances where meals are served at a number of small tables without extra charge. In former times the luxury of eating one's dinner *à part* always involved a certain addition to the bill, though the *menu* was in no way modified. The change has proved extremely welcome, and might be made general.

The proprietors of even the largest establishments need not be too proud to take a hint from the custom followed in a few instances that could be named, where the principle of *table d'hôte* is ingeniously combined with *service à la carte*, without any confusion, and with great advantage to the comfort of visitors. At least the suggestion based upon it seems worthy of consideration and discussion. In the cases referred to lunch is served from eleven till one, dinner from six till eight. The *carte du jour* is sufficiently abundant to give a moderate choice. A hungry person with good appetite may work steadily through to the end. If he is *en pension* it is included in the day's charge. If he is not, the meal is at a fixed price. But an individual with more modest desires, or a feeble appetite, indicates the dishes he prefers to partake of, and is served with those only.

While there will always be persons of robust habits bent on getting all they can for their money, as they themselves would express it; to allow a freedom of choice to the more fastidious, or more delicate, would not in any way damage the proprietor, seeing that the maximum is fixed by himself. It is practically



**STREET IN FALICON**





## Culinary Chit-Chat

certain that if the choice offered were sufficiently varied, the total amount of food consumed by a given number of guests would be, not more, but much less than at present, and the satisfaction much greater.

This leads to another important suggestion already hinted at, namely, that the present fixed, unalterable, inexorable routine of the *menu* should be done away with. Why should there be for every day throughout the season, or indeed the year, the same unbroken sequence of "soup, fish, entrée, joint, vegetable, game, salad, sweet, dessert," with its sickening sameness, its hopeless absence of imagination? Let hotel-keepers remember that their guests, when at their own tables, do not allow themselves to be the slaves of any such foolish custom, but vary their meals according to the season, the occasion, their individual fancies, or the happy inspiration of the moment, and are ever on the lookout for some novelty, some new combination, some fresh excitement for the palate.

Now that the habit of dining at a restaurant has caught on among the wealthier classes, there is daily being gained a larger experience, with new capacities of appreciation, and an increased faculty for selection. Surely the very *chef* himself would be delighted to have an opportunity of showing his originality; and he would win as many laurels for the perfect execution of some simple but unaccustomed dish, as he now does for the invention of a new sauce intended only to mask the insipid uselessness of the viand it covers. Hotel caterers may well believe that the hints thus modestly

## Riviera

offered, contain the germs of a substantial benefit to themselves, through the increased satisfaction of their clients, if this desirable reform be carried out.

The generally acknowledged superiority of French cookery over most others that we are acquainted with has led to a more or less perfect imitation of it everywhere, even when the *chef* is not a native of France. Especially is this the case in the chief hotels where foreigners gather. But there are some among our compatriots abroad who decline to depend upon the hotel dining-room for their supply of food, and prefer to seek in the freedom of the public restaurant the variety for which they pine. Certainly it is not difficult for those who enjoy "the pleasures of the table" to find for themselves an almost bewildering supply of dishes when once they have left behind them for a while the Roast Beef of Old England, and set foot upon the continent of Europe. Not only has each country its characteristic *cuisine*, but each district has its favourite speciality for the delectation of the *gourmet* in search of fresh sensations; and the Riviera is not behind its rivals in this respect.

The traveller who would familiarise himself with unknown dishes, and has little or no previous experience to guide him, must boldly experiment with the (to him) strange names he may find on the daily bill of fare. Nor must he expect to be always successful. There will be many a mistaken choice; but treasures are there for the seeking. The wealthy *habitué* of the most expensive restaurants will not care to try his luck in modest establishments bearing the notice "Cuisine

## Culinary Chit-Chat

Bourgeoise" over their doors, and may well be left to take care of himself. But the owners of purses only very moderately well filled will find abundant compensation for their pains if they betake themselves occasionally to some of the less pretentious places. There are clean and respectable houses where for a single franc quite a tolerable lunch is served ; and for half as much again, say the equivalent of fifteen pence, many a good little restaurant entertains its guests. Needless to say, these are not the houses which lay themselves out to attract foreigners, especially English. If we are inclined to spend, say, two and a half francs, the equivalent of a couple of shillings, the width of choice is greater still, and will include a whole bottle of tolerable wine (*vin du pays*).

Even in the most unpretentious *menu* of these cheaper places the *hors d'œuvre* will almost invariably find a place. The average Englishman despises it and prefers to plunge into his *pièce de résistance* at once, and leave the trifling to come after, when the edge of his keen appetite has been worn off by a bit of serious work. His Continental rival, however, is, as a rule, a more delicate feeder ; prefers to begin with some inviting "prelude," like the opening "voluntary" with which the church organist seeks to dispose us for our devotions ; and in the *hors d'œuvre* there is an endless opportunity for imagination and variety. Its confessed object is rather to stimulate or create than to satisfy the appetite, and thus lead on by gradual steps to the more serious efforts which will follow. They are drawn



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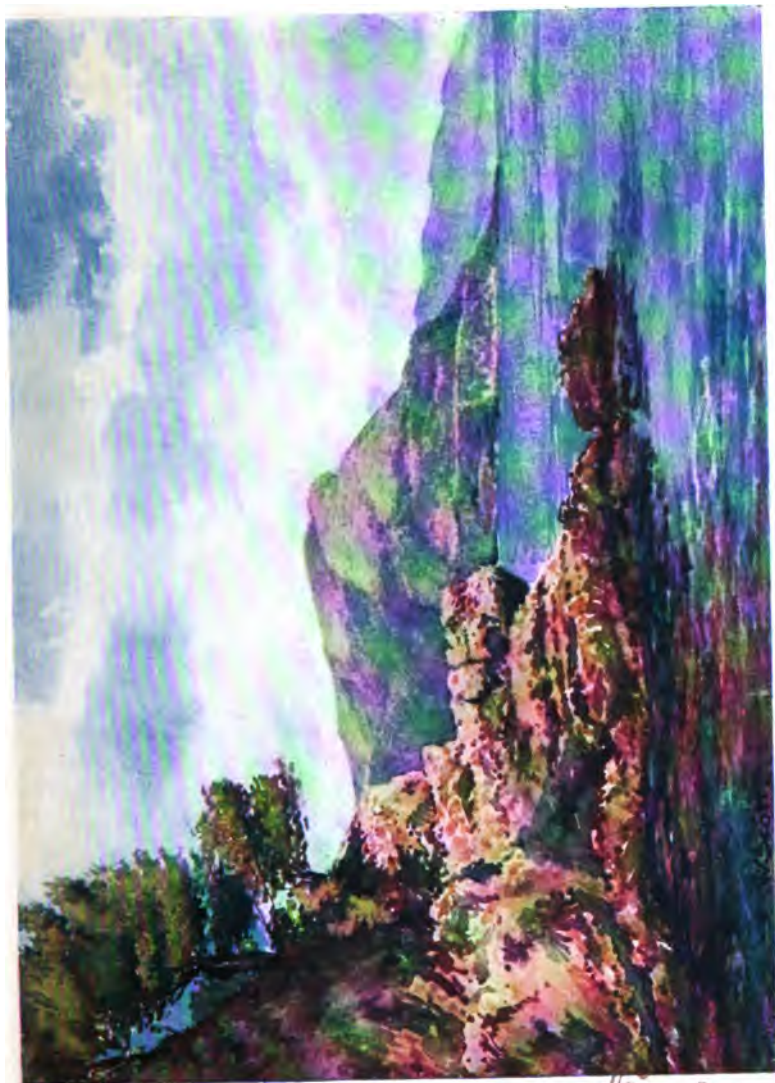
from a variety of sources, and include not only the fruits of the South, but the "fruits" of the sea—*frutta di mare*—a picturesque name given to those countless little edible treasures of the deep, of which other nations make a much more extensive use than we do.

We are familiar, of course, with the oyster, and have even heard of "winkles"; but most of us are a little inclined to be startled when for the first time we find set before us a dish of *oursins*—the sea-urchin,—and are expected to worry out the delicious morsels from their black and prickly shells. They are not only appetising, but extremely beneficial to health. We should, however,—even teetotallers,—carefully abstain from drinking water soon after eating them, if we wish to avoid very unpleasant consequences. The "urchins" seem to resent it very strongly, perhaps because it is—or should be for us—"fresh." A few sips of some delicate white wine are a suitable and delicious accompaniment.

The strongly salted or "pickled" anchovy is a more common feature of the first few mouthfuls of a meal, and olives should never be absent from the list of *hors d'œuvres*. Tiny *souffçons* of salad are favourites too, and may be prettily combined with other features. For instance, even the common tunny fish, if shredded fine, seasoned with pepper, oil, and vinegar, and then surrounded by slices of fresh tomato, with an outer border of good Spanish onion, is by no means to be despised.



THE "TÊTE DE CHIEN," FROM S. JEAN





## Culinary Chit-Chat

During the autumn and early winter, melons are largely used as *hors d'œuvres*, and they give a delightful clean coolness to the palate, disposing it to appreciate what follows later.

The Provençal is proverbially a good feeder, and "does himself very well." A large portion of what we call the French Riviera lies in Provence, and we may pick up many hints which can be worked out at our leisure when we return home.

The Italian Riviera has its own specialities too, and there are probably not many untravelled Englishmen who have ever heard of, much less tasted, the delicious *buttarega* (in pure *lingua*, *bottarica*), a sort of dry caviare, made in Genoa from the eggs of the tunny fish. Cut into thin slices, it is eaten, during the season, with fresh black figs—a curious mixture, some will think, but really excellent, and at least a novelty for a jaded palate.

Compared with our Northern seas, the Mediterranean is not rich in good fish, and the visitor should therefore be prepared for a sort of disappointment. The few favourable specimens which from time to time come to hand are readily snapped up by the wary. Yet who has not heard of the famous *bouillabaisse*, or fish soup, for which the French shore is famous? To give anything approaching an effective receipt would be practically impossible, for to its making are necessary not only several kinds of fish, including lobsters, crabs, etc., and various herbs for flavouring, but the secret traditions of ages, and a knack supposed to be hereditary. At least this is the impression conveyed

## Riviera

if we make inquiries as to the process of production. Probably it is not half so serious as it seems. At Marseilles, for instance, some of the restaurants make a speciality of this favourite dish, and though the *menu* of palatial hotels will nowhere bear its name, it may be tasted in varying degrees of excellence right away to Mentone. Some of the best samples are produced by the fishermen themselves with the simplest utensils, and in picnic fashion.

Codfish appears largely in the bills of fare of the smaller restaurants; and though in itself very uninviting, it is capable of becoming, in the hands of a true artist, a dish fit for a king. In the whole range of our Northern treatment of fish other than plain boiling, we have nothing which can compare with a well-turned, creamy *brandade de morue* as it may be found, for instance, in some of the restaurants at Cannes.

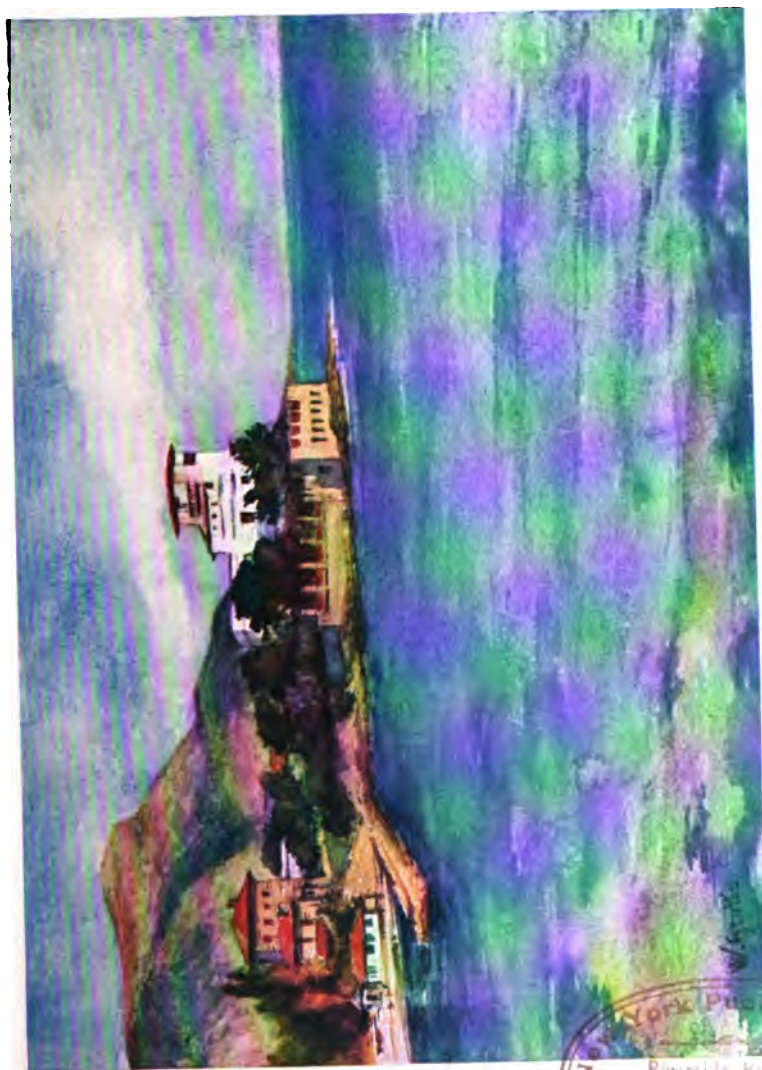
The delicious white flesh of the cuttle-fish—*sepia*—*calamaretti*, which the Italians fry to perfection, is another dainty to be tasted; and it need not remind us of the well-known pigment it also produces, though even that is said to be beneficial in certain internal complaints.

To find, as we may in some of the restaurants in the province of Porto Maurizio, for instance, that when we have ordered a *capon* the waiter brings us a fish may be a mild surprise, for it is not a name with which we are familiar in that connection; but it is still more strange to find another, and excellent, quality of fish under the appellation of *prete*, or priest.





**BEAULIEU**





## Culinary Chit-Chat

It seems unlikely that we of the North shall readily abandon our quite unreasonable prejudice against *escargots*, snails. Yet it might be worth an effort, for as a dish they are easily made most attractive, and are said to be nourishing. There are several ways of preparing them for the table, and at any respectable restaurant the visitor may safely take them without troubling to ask questions, or attaching importance to names. The chief variety is in the herb flavouring, which is so important an element of the dish. Along the Italian coast there is a special kind of snail, rather small in size, and of excellent flavour. It is known by the local name of *bagiüi*, or *bagiöi*, though on some parts of the coast, for instance at Bordighera, they are simply called *ciüi* (pronounced chooe). They have a curious feature distinguishing them from the common edible snail. Instead of the usual thin skin which the latter make over the opening of the shell when kept a certain time without food, the *bagiöi* make a convex white, thick, and strong shell which forms an effectual protection. But when taken in this state and kept in the house they do not live long. This quality is much appreciated by connoisseurs.

A favourite Provençal dish is *allioli* (*ail au lait*), and, though the very name of garlic is to some of us an abomination, it is not to be despised. There are several ways of serving *allioli*, but one example may suffice. For instance, the waiter brings us three small dishes : one will contain hot boiled potatoes (in their skins) ; a second has a piece of boiled codfish, about a

## Riviera

dozen snails, and a couple of small carrots ; a third holds the sauce which is to blend together all these ingredients. It resembles ordinary mayonnaise in appearance, but is very strongly flavoured with garlic. The rest depends upon our deft manipulation of these materials, and a suitable capacity for appreciation.

In the matter of soups the Italian *cuisine* is not as strong as its French rival ; and a convincing proof of this—if proof be needed—may be found in the almost universal habit of offering grated Parmesan cheese with every possible kind of soup, no matter what. As an occasional flavouring this is excellent, but it argues a strange lack of flavour in the soup itself if all kinds alike are to be reduced to the same level by its means.

It is a curious fact that out of Italy one can never eat macaroni properly cooked, unless in those rare cases when it is prepared by an Italian. The French or English cook always fails in one way or another. Usually it is too much boiled, and it is never served with that smartness which is essential to success. Macaroni which has been “done slowly” or “kept hot” is absolutely worthless, and may as well be thrown away at once. When suitably prepared the dish is so wholesome as well as so pleasing that it is a pity folks will not learn to treat it properly. There is no use in protesting, “Oh, but we like it more this or more that.” There is a right way, and there is a wrong way, but no *via media*, if macaroni is to be worth eating. Like violin-playing, it is either

## Culinary Chit-Chat

good or bad ; and the only way to learn its cookery is to be taught by an Italian.

The bill of fare in a foreign restaurant will often be found to bear names intended to be English. We are familiar with the different forms of *rosbif*, *bistec*, *biftek*, *rumsteack* ; and stockfish becomes *stocfiss* or *stokkafissé*. Some attempts are even more daring. We have seen *karek* doing duty for curry, and the dish was very well made in spite of its singular designation.

The Italians pay us a delicate compliment, perhaps unintentionally. A favourite "sweet" made with sponge-cakes, custard, preserved fruit, whipped cream, and a dash of rum or Marsala, is known as *zuppa Inglese*, English soup.

In the villages are found many curious and characteristic "sweets." *Pansaroli* are not unlike the *gofres*, gophers, and are produced from a batter made with flour, eggs, and yeast, allowed to become partly stiff, rolled out like ordinary paste, cut into strips, and then fried in oil. While still hot, if possible, they are eaten with powdered sugar. Quainter still are the celebrated *cubaité*. Very thin wafers are filled with a mixture composed of blanched nuts cooked with treacle. They are only to be found during winter and spring. They will keep some time—if held under lock and key. Otherwise it is difficult, especially if there are youngsters about.

A wide range of choice is offered to the visitor in the matter of cheeses, French, Italian, Swiss, from the pungent Roquefort and the "lively" Gorgonzola to the mildest creams, Brie, Mont d'Or, or the exquisite and

## Riviera

incomparable Camembert ; but as cheese is said, by the Piedmontese, to “*far la testa dura*,” it must be left to the taste of individuals to decide upon their merits.

For the post-prandial cup of coffee an admirable rule has been formulated. It should be :—

Bollente come l' Inferno (as hot as Hell).

Nero come il Diavolo (as black as the Devil).

Dolce come l' Amore (as sweet as Love).

Without in any way entering upon a discussion of the vexed question of teetotalism *versus* the moderate use of stimulants, it may be well to repeat here the advice already often given by competent medical authorities of all nationalities—and addressed especially to those coming abroad for the first time—not to neglect the occasional use of wine with or after meals. It should be remembered that many visitors are subjecting themselves to a great change, the extent of which they may hardly realise—a change of climate and atmospheric conditions, a change of food, a change of habits, and a change of *entourage*—which may have, probably will have, in the case of sensitive subjects, a very considerable effect on the nervous system at least, and through this again on the digestive organs, or *vice versa*, as the case may be. A mode of living which may be admirably suited to the surroundings in which one has been brought up, or to which one has been accustomed for a number of years, is not necessarily to be persevered in without modifications when those surroundings or conditions of existence have been suddenly and con-





**MONACO—EVENING**





## Culinary Chit-Chat

siderably modified. Visitors are often so delighted with their new experiences, and so exhilarated by the fresh atmospheric conditions, that they at once proceed to overexert themselves before they have got acclimatised. In consequence they soon begin to feel weak, indisposed, and ailing. Then they take cold perhaps ; anyhow they get ill, have to keep to their rooms, send for a doctor, and at once conclude that "the place does not agree with them." This remark is repeated, parrot-like, by scores of visitors, one after the other, till its repetition becomes sickening. They blame the air, or the sea, or the hotel, or the food, or the water, or any one of a thousand things rather than the real cause, which is simply their own unwisdom or carelessness. It is always "the place" which is said to be at fault, and never themselves.

How many cases of serious, even dangerous, illness might be avoided if only these mistaken persons would frankly have a reasonable care of themselves ; would, on the first symptoms of weakness or over-fatigue, rest themselves, take their pleasures more easily, drink a glass or two of the wine of the country, not for pleasure, but as a remedy, or, better still, as a simple preventive. Those who have lived many years in these surroundings have learned the lesson by experience, their own and others'. It has nothing to do with self-indulgence, with "example to others," or with any one of the many so-called moral—or immoral—principles so often preached about. It is simply a natural and useful precaution tending to self-preserva-

## Riviera

tion. Instead of this, so many—especially of the gentler and more delicate sex—fly to the teapot or other unwise expedients ; commit a real self-indulgence in a perfectly useless direction, and have only themselves to blame for the regrettable consequences.

As to the choice of wine, so much depends on individual tastes and tendencies that only one general rule can be laid down, and it is this : unless you have very special preferences, and are prepared to pay any and every price in order to satisfy them, keep to the wine of the district you are in, if you can get it. This last proviso is necessary, because in many hotels the wine of the district, even where good, is not kept ; or is not made available to visitors (unless under some other name). An enormous amount of mystification takes place nearly everywhere ; and wine is sold according to the chance label outside the bottle, and not according to the quality of the bottle's contents. It may, without unfairness, be said that visitors, let us say travellers in general, are in part responsible for this state of things ; for—following the fashion in this as in other matters—they keep on asking for certain qualities because the names happen to be familiar ; without troubling themselves to ascertain whether these qualities are really to be had, at least at any reasonable price. One or two instances will suffice.

Nearly every man who comes to Italy thinks it the "correct thing" to drink Chianti. So, in season and out of season, he asks for Chianti all over the country, and ignores all the other splendid wines which are freely



MONTE CARLO, FROM MONACO—EARLY MORNING





ORA 1

## Culinary Chit-Chat

produced. He does not know that the Chianti district, which has given its name to this deservedly famous wine, is an extremely small portion of Tuscany, and produces necessarily a limited amount of grape juice, while most of this is secured by private individuals, and only a comparatively insignificant proportion is put upon the market. Of this small quantity most is probably taken up by those who are "in the know"; so that the foreigner's chance of tasting it outside the district itself is thus reduced to a minimum. So large is the demand among Italians themselves that—though there are other excellent qualities available—the name Chianti is now usually given to common Tuscan wine in general, a proceeding misleading and perhaps regrettable, but not injurious to health so long as it is limited to genuine pure wine. Unfortunately, even in this way, the supply, enormous as it is, is not equal to the demand; and there has grown up the objectionable habit not only of blending (*tagliando*) other wines with a portion of Tuscan to assimilate the flavour, but—and to a perfectly incredible extent—of treating local wines with chemicals only, for the same purpose. Sulphuric acid is largely used in this way, though that is not the only unsuitable ingredient employed.

It can be imagined whether, under the circumstances, the use of these preparations is likely to benefit the persons partaking of them; but the demand for Chianti still goes thoughtlessly on; and hotel or restaurant owners must try to keep pace with it, until a wiser system shall prevail among their clients.

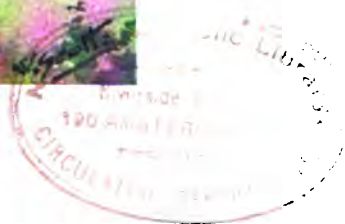
## Riviera

In this connection it may not be out of place to recall a curious incident which was casually mentioned in some of the London papers a year or two ago, and which seems to supply a convincing proof of what has just been stated. An Italian wine merchant in Soho was suspected of Anarchist sympathies, and the suspicions were strengthened by the fact that he was in the habit of purchasing considerable quantities of chemicals, such as are used in the manufacture of bombs and other infernal machines. Careful inquiries, however, resulted in information to the effect that these chemicals were exclusively used in "doctoring" his wine.

Another Italian wine has a well-deserved reputation, and many English travellers often ask for "Capri," not only on the Riviera, but all over the country. Here again it may be well to point out that the small island of Capri does not even produce enough wine for its own consumption, and has to import from the mainland. It is not too much to say that probably not one of those who continually flatter themselves they are drinking Capri grape juice has even tasted one drop of it unless he has been on the island itself. The fact is that—again to meet an enormous demand—the name "Capri" is given to a generally excellent wine produced in the Neapolitan district, and well deserving to be patronised. It is not always possible to obtain it in a genuine state, but when this happens it will be found one of the safest wines, of its class, that foreigners can use. Some years ago in one of the chief restaurants on the Corso in Rome, when some pretended



**THE OLD CHURCH, MENTONE**





## Culinary Chit-Chat

“Capri” was offered for our acceptance, and the argument used above had been advanced, the waiter said, with an assumption of righteous indignation, “And do you suppose, Signore, that Capri wine can only be made in Capri?”

Without pursuing the subject further, we may reiterate the advice to keep to the wine of the district, if possible, under all ordinary circumstances. As practically the whole district included under the name Riviera, both French and Italian, produces excellent wine, and could easily produce more, there should be no difficulty on the part of hotel proprietors in meeting their clients’ more reasonable wishes in this respect. As regards the clients themselves they may rest assured that whatever they get at present it has not, in all probability, any real connection with the district where it is supposed to be produced, beyond a similarity of name, which is easily supplied by the printer of the labels. Most likely it will be a local wine “doctored” to produce a flavour somewhat resembling that of a more famous district.

For instance, the usual wine supplied to visitors on the Italian Riviera is a cheap Tuscan, or still more often Piedmontese, wine, which the hotel-keepers can obtain, sound and fairly good, at a price which varies from threepence to fourpence a quart, and this wine they sell at from one and a half to two and a half francs per bottle.

Perhaps it may without unfairness be said that on the whole, though quite unnecessarily, the French wines



## Riviera

are superior to the Italian, because more care is taken in the making. While in France scientific knowledge and information are freely made use of to improve the quality of wine and its keeping powers, in Italy the science distributed by Enological Societies seems mainly directed towards diffusing information as to more effective methods of mystification ; and it is not by any means difficult to find in the newspapers prominent advertisements of mixtures, powders, or what not, by which certain well-known kinds of wine can be imitated without the introduction of any grape juice at all.

In this way Italy is—as in other cases—her own worst enemy. There is no need whatever for any inferiority of Italian wines as compared with French. The vines are as good, or might easily be so, in spite of the ravages of the phylloxera and other plagues ; the soil is quite as good ; the climate is at least as good, if not in some respects much better and more suited to the special requirements of the vine culture ; but the “happy-go-lucky” methods which generally prevail militate against the success which is only waiting to be seized and compelled.

On the French part of the Riviera there is no lack of good wines. The red wines of the Var valley resemble—in their common varieties—those of Piedmont. Though not heady, they are rather inclined to be heavy and indigestible, especially when too new. On the whole it may be found that the white is superior to the red.

## Culinary Chit-Chat

A large quantity of thoroughly good, sound, and reasonably cheap wine, both white and red, is now brought over from Algiers, where French enterprise and capital have worked wonders.



*Old Tower, Luceram.*



*San Remo—The Old Town.*

## CHAPTER V

### LA CÔTE D'AZUR

THE French portion of the Riviera is known as *La Côte d'Azur*, and may be said to begin at Marseilles for those who are travelling from England *via* Paris and Lyons, or at Ventimiglia for those arriving from Italy. Marseilles, which is so well known as a port of embarkation or landing for hundreds of travellers going to or coming from the East, Egypt, or Algiers, does not usually serve as more than a momentary stopping-place for visitors to the Riviera. It has its own interest as one of the most famous historical ports of the world, but need not occupy our attention here.

Nor do the majority of English travellers think it necessary to bestow more than a cursory glance at Toulon, one of the greatest of the French arsenals, and a most important base for the French fleet. No calculation regarding the balance of naval power in the Mediterranean—to say nothing of wider issues—can afford to ignore the tremendous influence which Toulon would exercise in any disturbance of European peace.

## La Côte d'Azur

From a purely historical point of view it may interest us to remember that here was the first post the great Napoleon held which brought him into prominence as a commander. By seizing an important strategical position and rapidly throwing up a battery, he was able to drive off the British fleet at a critical moment. The century which has elapsed since that event, so unfortunate for our arms, has enabled us to form a calmer judgment as to the character and genius of that remarkable man, who will ever remain one of the foremost figures in the world's history ; and Toulon, pleasant, gay, and lively in itself, may well possess for us an added interest in view of the circumstance just mentioned.

Continuing the journey eastwards, we soon enter upon the district more immediately connected with our subject. The casual visitor, or one arriving in these parts for the first time, will not be able to realise what a large amount of development is already in progress along this portion of the coast, and what efforts are being made towards utilising its possibilities in view of future demands for sanatoria, health resorts, bathing establishments on a large scale, or simple opportunities for *villeggiatura*. Probably, in a very few years, the changes brought about will be enormous and astonishing.

The first of the "stations" properly so called where winter visitors congregate is Hyères, less gay, less fashionable, and consequently less expensive than several of its rivals, and situated at some little distance—about two miles—from the sea. To many persons this

## Riviera

is considered an advantage, and in the case of real invalids is sometimes prescribed by their medical advisers as a *sine qua non*. By no means does it involve dulness or lack of beauty, and there are plenty of excursions to be made to points of interest in the neighbourhood. There is a distinct and pleasing individuality about Hyères, whether as regards position, climate, picturesqueness, historical interest, or accommodation for visitors. There is nothing meretricious about its attractions; and it has the power of inducing in many of those who stay there, a desire to continue their connection with it. To use a familiar phrase, "it is a place that grows upon one." It is sufficiently isolated to be uninfluenced by the temptations to which some other places are subject, and sufficiently self-contained to afford all the enjoyment and distractions required by the quieter and less excitable class of visitors; while not prudishly disdaining amusements of a more liberal character. To a mild and equable climate it adds considerable dryness, and absence of cold, piercing winds. The old portion of the town is attractive to those in search of the picturesque; is well situated on a steep and commanding position, crowned by the ruins of its old castle; and not too difficult of access for semi-invalids. The views from these ruins are extensive and fine, embracing—off the coast—the famous "Islands of Hyères," known by the pretty name of the Isles of Gold. A good deal of romance, some well founded, some purely fantastic, is mixed up with their history, which has been elaborately treated by several



MONASTERY OF THE ANNONCIADE, MENTONE, FROM  
THE SOUTH





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## La Côte d'Azur

writers, and will be found an interesting subject of research.

Hyères boasts of having been the birthplace of the great French preacher Masillon, but many of us will find even still more interest in the fact that for some time it was the happy residence of Robert Louis Stevenson, his home being known as *Châlet La Solitude*. His opinion of the place was expressed in a letter addressed to Mr. Sidney Colvin, and published in one of the London weeklies not so very long ago.

He says :—

My house is in the loveliest spot in the universe ; the moonlight nights we have are incredible ; love, poetry, and music, and the Arabian Nights inhabit just my corner of the world—nest there like mavis.

Then follows an amusing suggestion for his epitaph :—

Here lies  
the carcase  
of  
Robert Louis Stevenson,  
an active, austere, and not inelegant writer  
who,  
at the termination of a long career,  
wealthy, wise, benevolent, and honoured  
by the attention of two hemispheres,  
yet owned it to have been his crowning  
favour  
TO INHABIT  
LA SOLITUDE.

## Riviera

S. Raphael is a pleasant little place, clean, smart, comfortable, and well situated. It promises a very successful future, and is attractive not only during the winter, but also in the summer, when bathers crowd the beach, and the fishing-boats, with their red and yellow sails, remind us of Venice. From this place it is only a short drive, a pleasant and level run on a bicycle, or even an easy walk, to Fréjus, with its old Roman remains, and air of antiquity, sadly broken in upon by attempts at the inevitable progress of modern times. But Fréjus must not be neglected, though it is hardly attractive for any stay, and only ill provided, even as regards a passing call, for refreshment. The sentimental can wander round the amphitheatre and picture to themselves the wonderful performances, gladiatorial shows, combats with or between wild beasts, marvellous scenic apparatus, and all the excitement with which the people were amused and kept from political mischief.

Then there are the tall arches of old aqueducts, which may remind us of those crossing the Roman campagna, and once bringing the waters of distant hills to supply the wants of the inhabitants. In order to do justice to such relics of the past, a diligent study will have to be made, guide-book in hand, and considerable patience expended. Many of us will be contented with a casual glance, for most of the remains, except the arena, have only the character of fragments, and seldom happen to group very picturesquely. Enthusiastic students of history will, however, be able to

## La Côte d'Azur

expend a lot of sentiment in tracing out and piecing together the indications of ancient greatness, skill, and wealth. From Fréjus a delightful road runs to the sea just outside S. Raphael, and is bordered by a great variety of oleanders in endless shades of pink, yellow, and white. When they are in full bloom they form one of the prettiest sights along the coast.

From S. Raphael begins that delightful new road through the Esterelles, recently carried out on the initiative of the Touring Club de France, and running past Agay, Trayas, etc., into Théoule, and so on by Napoule to the main road which brings us to Cannes. This road, known as the "Nouvelle Corniche," passes along the coast, among the pine-woods, by those wonderful red rocks which, when represented in pictures, are said to be absurd and impossible, and through wild scenery, now lonely, but likely to be gradually dotted over with villas, cottages, or even hotels. Already a select few among French artists and literary men have settled there; and as an excursion the drive along this road should on no account be missed.

We pass Agay, prettily situated on its *Rade*, and may well stop to lunch or dine at the comfortable and very clean hotel overlooking the sea. The gardens run down to the water's edge, and there are facilities for bathing. The cooking is tolerable and the wine excellent. From Agay it is easy to make—in fine weather—an excursion to the *Gorges du Malinfernet*, a splendidly wild, lonely, and fascinating spot, where

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the rocks are tossed about in fantastic forms, and stained with the most marvellous colouring.

Another favourite excursion is to the cave of S. Honorat, and pleasant walks among the mountains abound in all directions. They may be so planned as to rejoin the new road farther on, or the old one leading from Fréjus to Cannes, which joins its rival near the ground of the Golf Club.

Cyclists, except strong ones, will find the road rather hilly, but an occasional forced walk will only afford opportunities for noticing the really lovely views where tiny bays run up between the porphyry rocks, and the deep blue or green water reflects them in purple shadows only accentuated by chance reflections of passing clouds. Sometimes we are high above the water, and look down sheer into its depths ; sometimes we can step from the road and after a few paces dip our feet into the little waves as they come rippling gently in with a soft lapping sound like a lullaby. All around is colour, and again colour, which fascinates us while it seems unreal, especially when seen under the warm rays of the summer sun, so far removed is it from the tame tints of Northern shores. In and out the road winds with ever-changing views. The *Phare de la Baumette* is left away behind us, and we pass first the viaduct and then the *Pointe d'Antéore* and the *Pointe du Petit Caneiret*, afterwards sweeping round *Cap Roux*, where the great red rocks come right down into the sea ; on past *Le Trayas* to the *Baie de la Figuérette*, then a climb up the *Col de l'Esquillon*,

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and there follows a long steady run down past the *Pointe de l'Aiguille* to Théoule, with delightful views of the distant coast, where Cannes and Nice are sleeping in the sunshine, backed by the wavy lines of the Maritime Alps.

Théoule is a charming little spot, sheltered, beautifully situated, clean, and as yet unspoiled, but with a railway station on the main line, and therefore easy of access. It looks across the bay of Napoule, and has fishing-boats, many-coloured rocks, the loveliest blue water,—in fine weather,—and pretty views.

A short distance eastwards from Théoule we come upon the curious group of rocks by the road known for centuries as *La Porte des Pendus*. Tradition has it that in olden times the *Seigneur* of the district used to execute summary justice upon criminals by hanging them between these rocks, hence the name; and it is within the limits of reasonable conjecture that unfortunate travellers who objected to being plundered may have shared the same fate. This point forms a pleasant object for a drive from Cannes.

A short descent brings us into Napoule, another small and rather picturesque place, gradually coming more into notice amongst foreigners now that the golf links of Cannes, which are not far away, are becoming well known and patronised. Players make use of Napoule Station when they do not drive or cycle to the links.

In comparing the principal towns of the *Côte d'Azur* a French writer has said that “Cannes est le pays où l'on

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jouit de la vie." The judgment is a just one, for here the climate, the position, the surroundings, the associations, all unite to favour the place as a winter resort ; and to render it less dependent on amusements, excitements, or indulgence of various kinds. Life can be enjoyed and be pleasant enough without them, if personal worry, that arch enemy, be absent. This characteristic is reflected in the place itself, in the habits, and in the composition of the foreign colony. There is a certain indefinable selectness, superiority if you will, or perhaps one should say distinction, to be noted in looking round. It is not less cosmopolitan than its rivals, but there is less of the "rowdy" element than in some places, and less of the mere invalid element than in others. Wealthy and leisured people come here to be quiet, to pass the winter in favourable surroundings, and while not disdaining pleasure are not given to undue excitement. Opinions are divided as to whether the recently erected Municipal Casino is going to be a blessing or the reverse. Cannes has at last decided to bring herself more nearly into line with some of her rivals, and to provide certain desirable opportunities for legitimate entertainment which have hitherto been lacking. If proper care be exercised in directing the enterprise, it need not necessarily lead to an influx of those rowdy and undesirable elements from which this most select of winter resorts has hitherto been free ; but the task before its managers is not an easy one, and the temptations to err on the side of too great laxity are very considerable.





IN THE BORRIGO VALLEY, MENTONE





## La Côte d'Azur

Everybody is supposed to know that the founder of the fortunes of Cannes was Lord Brougham, and the fact is recorded in a practical manner by his statue, which stands in the principal "place," and by a "square" which bears his name.

There is comparatively little interest coming to us from the past, but in the old part of the town are portions of the Church of S. Anne (thirteenth century) and a tower said to have been begun in the eleventh century. Other features which should be studied are to be found in connection with the islands of Ste. Marguerite and S. Honorat, the *Îles de Lérins*, seat of the famous monastery which played so important a part in the civil and ecclesiastical history of the Riviera during the Middle Ages from the fifth century onward. The former of these two islands is associated with the oft-told story of the Man of the Iron Mask, and in more modern times, indeed within the memory of many of us, with the unfortunate Marshal Bazaine ; he being for some time confined in the fort there, whence he escaped in August 1874.

As to the island of S. Honorat, many learned books have been written without exhausting the story of the endless vicissitudes undergone by the religious foundation there. It was over and over again subjected to spoliation, fire, and murder by pirates ; was made owner of Cannes itself ; was lord of Seborga, the interesting village behind Bordighera, and established there a mint for the coining of its own money. It possessed properties innumerable, and did not escape persecution by

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jealous rivals. At the present day there are still interesting remains to be seen, and in fine weather the excursion is a most enjoyable one.

For English people in particular a melancholy interest attaches to Cannes as the place where the late Duke of Albany died, in 1884. A memorial church and fountain have been erected to his memory. In 1887 her late Majesty our beloved Queen Victoria passed some time in the Villa Edelweiss, and it is known that His Majesty King Edward is favourably disposed towards Cannes as a temporary residence.

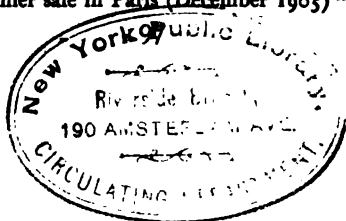
Some visitors find the air of Cannes exciting and are unable to sleep well there. Such may be suited by a sojourn at the little suburb of Le Cannet, on high ground about a couple of miles away, and served by an electric tram. Others who prefer to go still farther will take the train to Grasse, the city of perfumes and good living, where prosperity flourishes all round, and poverty has been effectually driven away. Here at least there are no "unemployed," real or imaginary, and the inhabitants are generally sleek and well-to-do. No small part of the amusements of visitors consists—if they are so disposed—in visits to the great establishments for the making of perfumes and for the candying of fruits. The exports in these two branches of trade are enormous, and show no signs of diminution. America takes a large proportion, especially of the perfumes. The whole of the district round is practically one large garden devoted to the cultivation of flowers, not for their beauty but for the essences which

## La Côte d'Azur

can be extracted from them. It is very sad to see the sacks and baskets of lovely petals ruthlessly sacrificed, but Nature is herself so cruel in her reckless waste that we have to get used to the methods, especially as we are glad enough to make use of the resulting perfume. The principal extracts made are the celebrated attar of roses, said to be even more valuable than that imported from the East; and the *néroly* produced from orange flowers, which is used in making the well-known eau de Cologne. Besides these two principal flowers enormous quantities of violets are used, also the tuberose, cassia, jonquil, and jasmine. There are, in addition, mills for crushing olives and making oil; and the district produces a certain amount of good wine, so that it is indeed a favoured land. If not literally "flowing with milk and honey," it has all the equivalents, and, from a business point of view, is prosperous in a very marked degree.

There is little of architectural interest beyond a certain general picturesqueness in the older streets. Even the parish church, which dates its foundation from about the eleventh century, has been so altered in later times as to be worth very little from this point of view. But the real artistic interest of Grasse lies in the fact that it was the birth place of the celebrated French painter, Jean Horace Fragonard, who died just a hundred years ago (1806). Until recently a series of his paintings was visible in one of the houses here, but they are no longer to be seen.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> At the great Cronier sale in Paris (December 1905) "Le Billet Doux,"



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From Grasse the most favourite excursion is past the picturesque village of Le Bar to the Gorges du Loup. The walk up the gorge by the side of the rushing stream is very pleasant and not difficult. At the celebrated viaduct is a good hotel, and there are, besides, one or two restaurants where lunch can be obtained. Grasse may also be reached from Nice, or *vice versa*, as there is a railway between the two. It is a rival one to that communicating with Cannes. Unfortunately the two are so managed—or mismanaged—as to give the greatest possible amount of inconvenience and annoyance to passengers wanting to use both, but feeling no interest in their rivalries.

If we follow the coast road, the old *Corniche*, from Cannes eastwards (and there is a convenient service of trams), we shall soon come to the town of Golfe Juan, whence a road leads to Vallauris, home of the pottery industry, and a pleasant outlet for superfluous cash in over-burdened pockets. Farther still along the coast is Juan les Pins, quiet, and as yet unpretentious, but growing, and likely to have what is known in the parlance of speculators as a future. The indefiniteness of the term may be excused, as it allows each one to attach to it his own chosen signification in the general sense of prosperity. Yet another stage of the tram line and we reach what was once Antibes. Its inhabitants would probably resent the implied suggestion, but those who knew and loved the old city a quarter of

by Fragonard, a single figure on canvas, 33 in. x 27 in., brought £17,600 (a record price for a Fragonard).





**CAP MARTIN**



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perished treasures of antiquity that passed away when the speculator's pickaxe levelled down the age-stained walls of old Antibes.

The traveller who proceeds further eastward, whether by road or rail, soon approaches one of the important natural lines of demarcation which have served from ancient times down almost to our own day. He is nearing the valley of the Var. On his left he will see the interesting town of Cagnes, lying picturesquely on the hillside, like so many places we shall have occasion to mention from time to time, and not without some old features, more or less well preserved. There is no use in disguising the fact that to many of those who pass along this road the chief interest attaching to Cagnes will lie in the fact that here are situated the excellent links of the Nice Golf Club, reached by a good service of trams starting from the Place Massena.

We have already noted the verdict upon Cannes as the place where one enjoys life. The same writer tells us that "Nice est une ville où l'on s'amuse." Again we must agree with him. Do you want to amuse yourself on the Riviera? Then by all means go to Nice. "It's just lovely," as our charming cousins say; a delightful *P'tit Paris* within a manageable compass, and has been also called the "salon" or drawing-room of France. If you are not too delicate you will not mind the slightly greater amount of cold experienced there. Nice is perceptibly colder than Cannes or Mentone, and the wind can be nasty at



FRANCE AND ITALY. ON THE SHORE, MENTONE,  
LOOKING TOWARDS BORDIGHERA





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times. But its sunshine, its gaiety, movement, and general bright cheerfulness make it the queen of the Côte d'Azur. The magnificent *Avenue de la Gare*, with its fine trees, its splendid shops bearing some of the best-known names of London or Paris, its local specialities, its busy service of electric trams, and its general lively air of smartness, make it a never-failing source of pleasure and amusement. You must be morbid or miserable, indeed, if you can resist its brightening influence. Do you want a walk, neither lonely nor dull? Take it along the breezy *Promenade des Anglais*, and you may extend it for miles if you like, right away to the mouth of the Var. Do you want a view? Climb up the steep path on the west to the heights of the "Château"; or, if you prefer, walk up the longer gently-sloping carriage-way, under pines, cypresses, and ilex, to the same point, and you will have all Nice stretched out as on a map at your feet, with its background of purple hills. On the broad platform at the summit the Touring Club de France has placed one of its useful *tables d'orientation*, and by this you may, with a little trouble, trace out the names and identify all the surrounding hills, villages, and chief points of interest. If your thoughts turn towards home, you will find indicated the exact directions in which lie all the chief capitals of Europe. If you want to send a delicate reminder to your friends, there are numerous opportunities for buying and despatching the picture postcard in all its varying designs.

The excursions in the neighbourhood of Nice are



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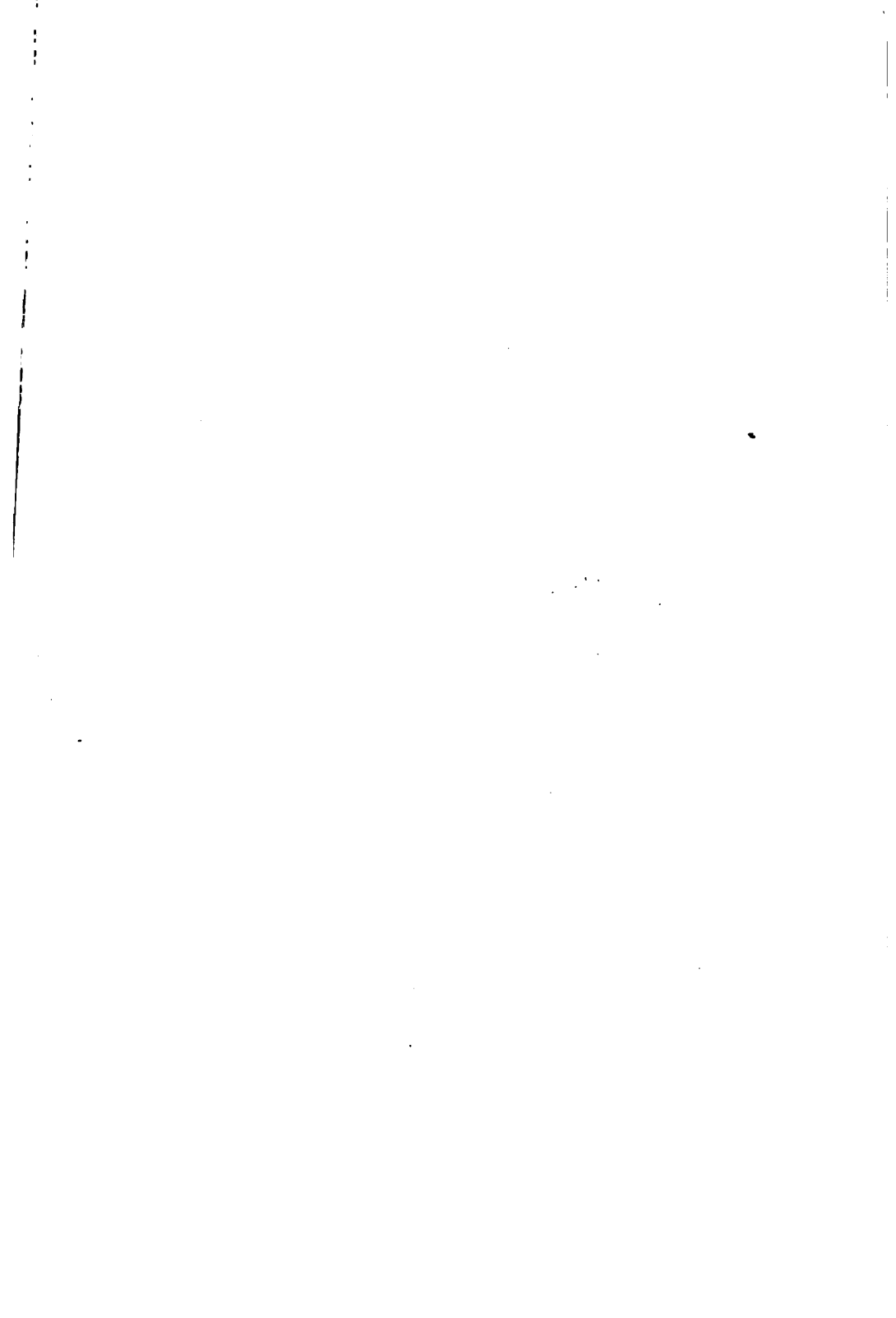
numerous and full of interest. The valley of the Var on one side, and the valley of the Peillon on the other, are full of those picturesque villages so characteristic of the region. To say nothing of a special service of trains on the railway, "Monte" is only an easy tram ride away, passing along the pretty and new road through Villefranche, Beaulieu, and the Condamine, with endless lovely views of the sea and the hills changing at every turn. You may bicycle if you will, only try to choose a time when the roads are not being—or have not just been—watered, for this operation is done so effectively that abundant mud is the result, and side-slip constantly to be guarded against. Of course motor cars appear in shoals, and of all sorts and conditions, containing nearly every class of occupants, except the very poor; while a few "antiquated" carriages may still be seen occasionally, drawn by old-fashioned horses. Indeed one may sometimes see some rather good specimens of horseflesh, the last of their race, poor things, and perhaps saddened by the thought of their rapidly approaching extinction at the hands of the electric or petrol machinist.

Walk or ride where you will, east, west, or north—on the south is the lovely blue sea for boating—and you will always be glad to get back to merry Nice, which, unlike some of its rivals, will welcome you and try to make you happy whether you are enormously rich or comparatively poor, so long as you can and will honestly "pay your way." In Mentone, for instance, you may "go hang" if you



ITALY AND FRANCE. MOUTH OF THE ROYA





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cannot spend the price of a first-class hotel. For all practical purposes, and in spite of certain pretensions, there are no second-class hotels, there is no accommodation for respectable folks of moderate means who object to being "fleeced." There is scarcely a "moderate" restaurant in the whole place, but in Nice there is an abundant supply for all purses, as our French friends say. From the stately "Régence" beloved of gourmets—and with prices to correspond—there are establishments of all gradations, down to the modest "Lyonnais," where for one single franc you can get, cleanly and courteously served, a lunch consisting of soup, fish, meat, vegetable, cheese, and fruit, with abundant bread and half a bottle of wine. True, the portions will not be large, and the wine will not be *Château Lafitte*, but *que voulez-vous*? At least you will not be in danger of starvation so long as a single franc is left.

Another restaurant, up to date in name, the "Twentieth Century," will treat you even better for a franc and a half; and here may be seen daily a most respectable set of young men, students, clerks, shopmen (some of them English), a priest or two, and ladies of moderate means who have been out shopping, or have business occupations to keep them from home during the day. It is a thoroughly respectable house.

And how numerous are the confectioners' shops, the tea-rooms, the candied fruit shops, the luxuries and dainties spread out for your delectation, not forgetting one of the specialities of the place—those neat little boxes of sugared violets; you must be hard indeed

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to please if you cannot find something to your taste.

For amusement there are the theatres with comedy, comic opera, serious opera, drama, both French and Italian. There are music-hall entertainments and high-class concerts, and there are even facilities for gambling. Occasionally the "Jetée Promenade" will be one blaze of light against the dark sky of the night-time, and fireworks will be flashing and banging around it; a capital advertisement for the entertainment going on inside as well as a free amusement for the crowds who remain outside.

Do you like picturesque groups, merry crowds, and heaps of flowers? Go to the market at the east end of the town, and see the stalls piled high with the golden or scarlet blossoms, according to the season. Here the good housewife, the trusted maid, or the portly cook will be making provision for the day's food, where fruits and vegetables fill the space under the quaint umbrellas or on the ground in the sunshine or the shade.

A strong effort is being made to turn Nice into a veritable "art centre," *centre d'art*, but, unfortunately, with a limited meaning to the name. In other words, it is desired that the local theatre—one of the most important along the whole coast—should be the scene of "first performances" of new plays, an occurrence now practically prohibited by the absurd prejudice which exists, to the effect that nothing can possibly be good which has not received the seal and sanction of a

## La Côte d'Azur

"première" at Paris, or been approved by the critics of that "centre of art." It would seem to us Northerners, accustomed to a totally different system of theatrical enterprise, that there is scarcely a necessity for such a tremendous agitation about so simple a matter as the first performance of a new dramatic work. But we cannot grasp the intricacy of the arrangements, the "wheels within wheels" involved in being so far slaves to an inelastic custom in such matters ; or realise how little even the leaders of the dramatic and theatrical professions are free to shake themselves from its thralls.

Considerable light is, however, thrown on the subject, if we follow the discussion carefully enough to perceive that one of the keys of the situation is the fact that no speculation of the kind indicated can be expected to succeed unless the communal authorities are willing to make a considerable grant of public money towards it. Here is the sore point ; here is the real object aimed at ; for, of course, if any manager—with or without capitalists behind him—chose to take the theatre and mount a new work independently, as is always done in England, there is nothing whatever to hinder him from doing so. It seems that in France and Italy no one can be found to do such a thing, and the public purse is always appealed to, to cover any risk of loss. This, which would seem to be a sure way of guaranteeing success, is probably, on the contrary, one of the most prolific sources of failure. For theatrical managers who know that under any circum-

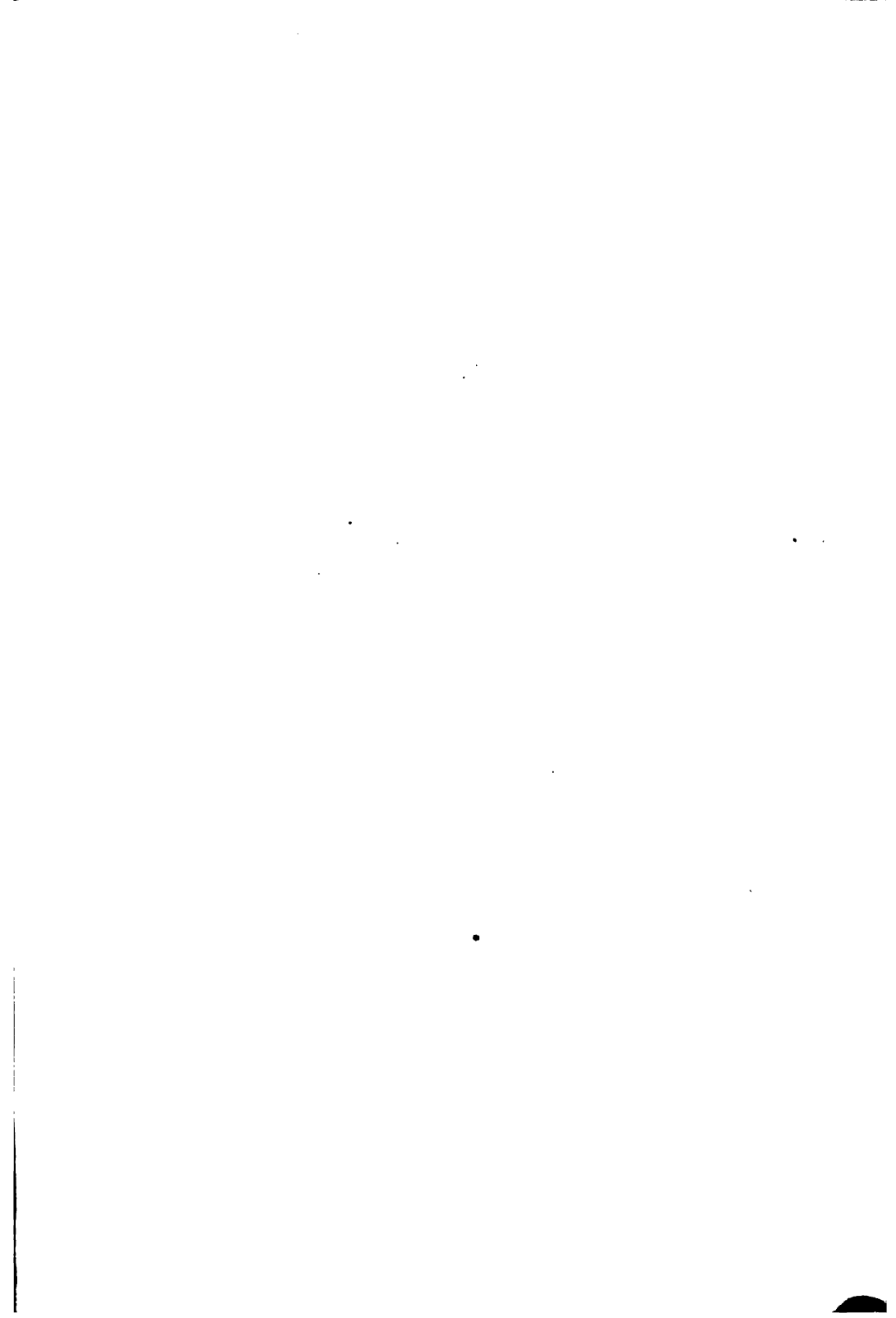


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stances they cannot lose much, but always have a certainty to fall back upon, instead of making such efforts as would ensure success, are too often content with just so much expenditure of energy as will procure them the assured subsidy ; and they leave the rest to chance.

Certainly the presence of a large and cosmopolitan crowd of visitors, all eager for amusement, and most of them devoted to theatre-going, should justify an experiment upon a bolder basis than that at present used ; and if the speculation were managed upon sound business principles—including the inevitable advertisement and “pushing”—there is no reason why Nice should not have its interesting “premières” as well as any other place. It is hardly necessary to use so high-sounding a phrase as “Nice, Centre d’Art,” to indicate or procure so obviously desirable a result, to say nothing of the fact that “art centres” are not created by a stroke of the pen, but grow up patiently and slowly into existence and recognition by their own efforts, their own merits, and their own special qualifications.

Whether or no Nice ever will succeed in being recognised as a *centre d’art*, it is generally looked upon as being the centre of the French Riviera. It is so by its geographical situation, and it may fairly be considered so from the point of view of its characteristics and its visitors. Extremes meet in Nice ; the very wealthy come there, the poorer are welcome ; the most refined and artistic are charmed with its natural beauties, the



OLD WALLS, VENTIMIGLIA, AND CHURCH OF  
S. MICHELE





## La Côte d'Azur

hundred and one delightful excursions to be made from it, and the picturesque villages in seemingly impossible situations to be found up its valleys ; while the less educated, more Bohemian travellers find its amusements to their taste, and its proximity to other and more expensive resting-places convenient for their purpose.

Cape Mont Boron separates the *Baie des Anges*, "the Bay of the Angels," on which Nice lies, from the Gulf of Villefranche, where ships of the French fleet may frequently be seen at anchor. The well-known lighthouse of Villefranche stands at the extreme end of the peninsula, which stretches out on the opposite side of the gulf. On the eastern side lies the pleasant little village of S. Jean, a favourite resort of the Nicois out for a holiday, and far from being unknown to some of the more quietly disposed of our own countrymen as a place of residence. From S. Jean to Beaulieu is a charming promenade along the sea.

Beaulieu has laid itself out to be a great success, and seems destined to attract larger numbers of visitors each year. Its situation is lovely. It is essentially modern in all respects, and has no past to be responsible for, explain away, or cover up and hide. There are villas galore, and plenty of hotels. It is sheltered, sunny, and clean. It is on a well-served tram line, and is near to "Monte." What more can its inhabitants want from gods or men ? Surely fortune must be theirs for the seizing. Among travellers who have not yet stayed there, it is chiefly known as the place where the late Lord Salisbury had a villa, with the

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name of *La Bastide*. A prominent London journal is responsible for the statement that his Lordship designed the villa himself. In writing to inquire whether there were any *truth* in the story, a correspondent added : "I can understand the noble Marquis as a cabinet-maker, but I doubt his success as an architect."

A pleasant walk of a couple of miles, or less, brings us to a point on the road from which we can see that marvellously picturesque village, Eze, perched high up on the very crown of the cliff, whence its castle has looked down upon sea and shore, and known the fluctuating tide of fortune, since the Saracens laid its gaunt foundations on the rock more than a thousand years ago. It is a weary and toilsome, though picturesque, climb up from the railway station and the lower road, for all but strong walkers, and the easier way to reach the village is to descend from La Turbie by the upper or old Corniche road. Visitors who are thinking of taking lunch there should be sure to carry their provisions with them, unless they are willing to be mercilessly fleeced for indifferent food and poor accommodation on the spot. *A buon intenditore bastano poche parole.*

Somewhat farther along the shore, and on a rock which juts out into the sea, stands the castle of the Princes of Monaco. Its foundation dates back, according to historians, to the erection of a temple to Hercules Monœcus by the ancient Greeks ; and in modern times it is chiefly known as the abode of that royal Prince who draws his chief income from the gambling

## La Côte d'Azur

establishment of Monte Carlo. Monaco and its neighbours show what can be done by intelligent daring when backed by easy circumstances as regards money; and when the hindering influences of a score or two of so-called "representatives of the people," all anxious to have a finger in the pie, each desirous of seeing his own pet theory or fad triumphant, are mercifully absent. Scarcely anywhere, if at all, in the world can a specimen of government be found which gives such perfect satisfaction to the governed. There is no conscription, and there are practically no taxes. There is an abundance of work, of opportunities for making money, and unrestricted liberty in most things. Among the very few restrictions is a wise and not unfairly oppressive one to the effect that the natives of the Principality, the subjects of the Prince of Monaco, are usually not allowed to enter the gambling establishment and squander their gains in folly. That is reserved for the unwise foreigner, who is considered fair game for plunder, and is plucked relentlessly if he allow himself to be drawn within the circle of the giddy whirlpool. On one or two days only in the whole course of the year is this stern decree relaxed, just to save appearances and satisfy any latent aspirations towards gain of a merely speculative kind, or to appease the Goddess of Chance, who might resent any forcible restrictions upon the devotions of her worshippers. To say truth, the unwise foreigner seems to exhibit a most persistent desire to burn his fingers, or make a hole in his pocket; and resents any attempts to protect him. Another



## Riviera

statement of importance may be unhesitatingly made, viz. that whatever the varying fortunes of play, whatever the run of luck either way, no shadow or suspicion of unfairness can ever be said to rest for one moment on the management or its representatives. Its devotees may rest assured on that score. They can have nothing to complain of. And the opponents of the system of gambling as a whole can never in common honesty venture to claim that fools are parted from their money under any false pretences or by illegitimate means. Whatever criticisms may be offered, by whomsoever offered, and in whatever direction, this fact should—and in common decency must—be borne in mind. Of course it is true that Monte Carlo has been created exclusively for gambling, but it has become a rendezvous for a certain class of rich people almost apart from the play. At all events it is true that a not inconsiderable or insignificant proportion of its visitors, especially among those who own villas or stay there during the whole or the greater part of the season, are attracted by quite other than the opportunities for gambling, and, in fact, seldom or never enter the rooms. They meet a large number of their acquaintances there ; they enjoy the opportunities for amusement so lavishly provided by the managers of the Casino, and they have always around them the wonderful gifts of Nature in scenery, wealth of flowers, gorgeousness of foliage, mildness of climate, and facility of communication with other favourite resorts, such as are to be found nowhere else. The concerts alone



ON THE SHORE, BORDIGHERA—EARLY MORNING





## La Côte d'Azur

attract crowds of music-lovers who never risk a single *louis* on the tables, and yet in the minds of some extreme opponents they are ranked with the wildest and most reckless players. Surely there is room here for the exercise of a little of that Christian charity so often prated of, so seldom exercised, and always least of all by those who are loudest in protestation of the necessity for it. An ounce of practice is said to be worth a pound of theory, and especially is this the case with regard to preaching; and if those whose business it is to teach us how to act would only show us by their example how to look upon and judge of what we consider the failings of our neighbours, we might make a little more progress towards doing right.

"Monte," as it is familiarly designated, is to some the paradise, to others the plague-spot, of the Riviera, according to their varying points of view. Its beauties, natural and artificial, its luxury, its social attractiveness,—“moths being drawn towards a candle,” says the cynic,—the strains of its incomparable orchestra, the dark secrets of its scented gardens in the cool nights of the spring-time when the silent stars tell no tales of a sure death-refuge sought under the sheltering leaves; the piles of gold, the haggard or painted faces, virtue and vice rubbing shoulders with each other in the mad greed for gain; the lost honour and the wild reckless waste of human life and substance; each contribute to make up a kaleidoscopic scene without its parallel elsewhere. To the devotees of “Monte” the fascination is apparently irresistible, and is to them a sort of

## Riviera

obsession which not infrequently becomes a nuisance to their neighbours not yet sick with the same disease. It is "Monte, Monte, Monte," from morning till night, day after day, and week after week. Nothing else is talked of or thought about by each and all; from the modest "punter" who risks nothing beyond a few five-franc pieces, to the rich man who steadily plays on with his thousands. The run on this; the chances of that; the advantages of one game; the disadvantages of the other; the solemnity of a "record"; the numberless systems which have little in common but their folly and the systematic ruin of their followers—these and every other aspect of the excitement are the staple subject of conversation; varied only now and then by a dash of some spicy scandal; or a careless reference to the enforced departure, if not the miserable suicide, of some sad and ruined victim.

Then there is, on the other hand, the pious though futile crusade against it all. There is the feeble sermon feebly published by the preacher who knows—or would know if he did not wilfully close his eyes and ears—that half his congregation not only has been there, but "still will go," as Dr. Watts would have said. And he will not dare to make a stronger protest lest the offertories upon which his income depends should show a painful diminution.

There are the "unco guid," who when compelled to pass through the Principality ostentatiously draw down the blinds of their railway carriages "lest they should even *see* that wicked place." They have been





A ROSE GARDEN, BORDIGHERA



2000

## La Côte d'Azur

known to petition the authorities of the Italian railway company, who—Heaven knows!—are chary enough of granting anything advantageous in the way of train service or accommodation, to suppress the useful little “local trains” between Ventimiglia and San Remo because, forsooth, to the great offence of certain meddling busybodies, “they afford additional facilities for visiting Monte Carlo”!

So great has been the prejudice against Monte Carlo in certain quarters that even the late Bishop of Gibraltar for a long time conscientiously hesitated to sanction the establishing of a church and clergyman in the neighbourhood, although one would have thought—if the estimate of its morality or immorality were correct—it was precisely in such a situation that Church work could be most usefully undertaken.

The fascination of “Monte” is shown not only in the devotion of its regular frequenters, but in the almost morbid, and certainly amusing, curiosity of thousands who profess to disapprove of it. It seems to draw them with an irresistible force. They “must go and see it just once! Not to play, you know; we should not think of such a thing; only to look on!” Sometimes these individuals find themselves uncomfortably “left.” It is well known that there are certain formalities to be gone through before entering the rooms, ostensibly with the object of keeping out undesirable visitors. Permission is asked at a small office by the entrance where the attendants scrutinise the appearance, dress, and bearing of the applicant,

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ask his name, nationality, etc., and exercise the right of refusal, according to the whim of the moment. Some of our friends who disapprove of gambling, but have a desire to see other people commit themselves, may be among the doubtful cases. They are then asked their object in wishing to enter the rooms. If they were to declare frankly that they wished to play, they would probably be passed in at once ; but on their assertion that they only want to look on, they are mildly, or brusquely, as the case may be, informed that their company is not desired.

The absurd and illogical fashion in which this control is exercised gives rise to many comic incidents and much lively criticism ; while the management of the Casino never seems able to recognise that it is making itself supremely ridiculous in a quite unnecessary fashion. The gaudy painted butterflies of the demi-monde find no difficulty whatever in gaining admission, but the late Lord Salisbury was once refused entrance, and we have met at least one bishop whose clerical garb formed an insuperable obstacle to the satisfying of his legitimate curiosity. It is said that so elegant a personage as Miss Ellen Terry was not considered sufficiently well dressed, and an English duke was refused admittance *because his trousers were turned up*. It occasionally happens that out of a party of friends desirous of entering altogether, one, of just as good social position as the others, will find the door barred to him on the excuse that he is in "travelling costume," or some other equally futile pretext. If he protests and explains that

## La Côte d'Azur

he has always been admitted on previous occasions, one of the prosy little individuals who dodge round him will say, for instance, "But, Monsieur, look at your shoes! No, we can't let you in."

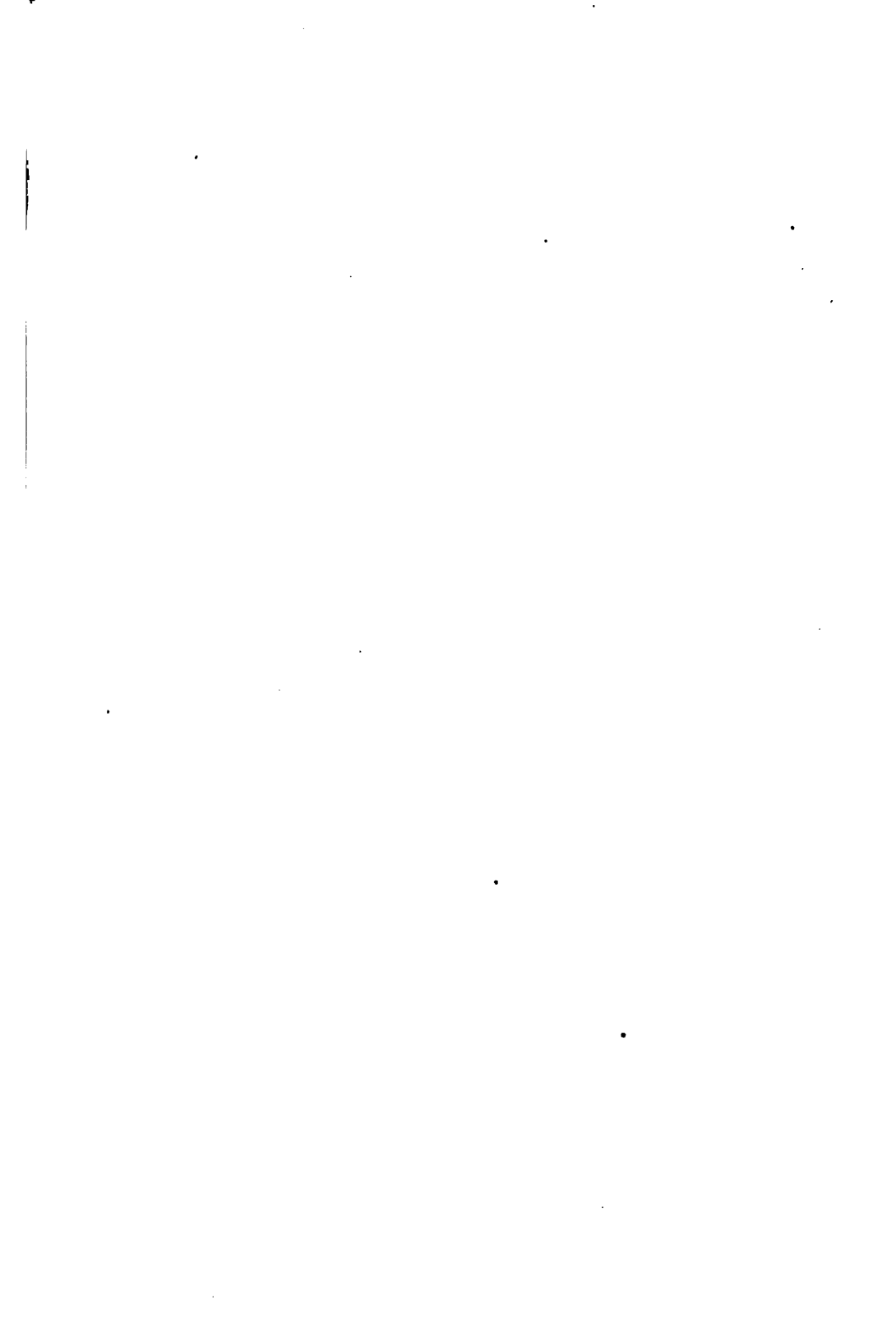
Of course the difficulties in the way of a really effective and at the same time reasonable control are enormous. The Casino has to be maintained as a paying concern. Many of those who play recklessly and lose large sums of money, to the bank's advantage, are persons belonging—morally speaking—to the dregs of society, and are in every way undesirable as neighbours or acquaintances. On the other hand, many of the best, noblest, and purest see no harm in obtaining a few hours' excitement at the price of a certain amount of gold which they can well spare, or feel disposed to risk. It is their business, and not other people's, what they choose to do with their money; but it is unfortunate that they should be obliged to rub shoulders, so to speak, with blackguards. The utmost precautions do not avail to keep out the gambler who grabs at another's winnings, and makes a scene in the hope of bullying his victim into silence. Sometimes the bank will even pay both parties rather than allow a scandal. The pickpocket is even with us in the neighbourhood of Monte, despite the vigilance of a staff of special detectives, and the railway is simply infested with him. A visitor who has been lucky enough to carry away some winnings from the tables should be specially on his guard, not only in the establishment itself, but at the railway stations, and

## Riviera

in the carriage on his return journey. There is one specially convenient piece of tunnel where many a victim has been "robbed" by the gentry of light fingers, and found no redress. It would need an administration very much more energetic than the present one, and possessed of much greater power, to put a stop to the evil; especially in these days, when public opinion is mainly in favour of a pitiable and despicable leniency towards the worst offenders, with too often a savage severity towards minor offences, to which their authors have been driven by pain and starvation. The administrators of the old Venetian Republic had a short sharp way with gentry of the pickpocket type, and would soon have cleared not only Monte Carlo, but a much larger area, of such detestable vermin.

Among the *habitués* of the gambling-tables is one individual whose spare time is occupied in the distribution of religious tracts, and the endeavour to convert others to his peculiar views on religion. He has already lost not only a large portion of his own fortune but that of his wife, in the endeavour to get rich at the bank's expense, but without avail. If you find yourself in the same carriage with him he will try to get into conversation with you about the "truths of Christianity," and, with a show of unctuous piety, will inform you that *he* has "found peace in Jesus"; but an hour afterwards you may see him at the tables gambling hard, as if his soul's salvation depended on the turning of the roulette wheel.

A well-authenticated story is told of a Scotch "meenister" who obtained permission to enter the





**ENTRANCE TO VALLEBONA**



7

## La Côte d'Azur

rooms, accompanied by several members of his family. Standing by one of the tables the good man was overheard "improving the occasion" with a neat little sermon. He said, "My dears, I have brought you here that you might see with your own eyes the extreme sinfulness of this sin, and learn to loathe it as it deserves." He continued in the same strain till he had exhausted his vocabulary of condemnation, and paused to allow his words to take effect. The young people paid attention, and, no doubt, tried to realise how terrible it was. However, it did not seem so very shocking, after all, and they soon began to notice the players round them, their excitement, and the piles of money changing hands. Little by little they commenced to share the excitement and take an interest in the play. There was a "run on red," and as each "jeu" was made, their attention was fixed more and more firmly. The old man stood behind them peering through his glasses and trying to look unconcerned. "Red again!" and one of the young folks turned in wonder to the father, who was bending over: "What's that? Red again! How strange!" Furtively the son took a coin from his pocket and placed it on the table. The minister either did not see, or in the excitement ignored the terrible lapse. "Red again!" The youth had won his stake, and the game had won the father, for he became so fascinated with the excitement that long afterwards he and his companions were still seated at the table playing as hard as any of their neighbours.

## Riviera

Many are the chance and curious meetings between friends or acquaintances in the gambling-rooms of Monte Carlo, when each wishes the other at "Jericho," for both are very much ashamed to have been found out. Many a whispered, "Mum's the word, old man!" seals a compact of silence which does more to draw them together in a semblance of friendship than a dozen more apparently potent reasons would have done. Occasionally it is a woman who turns pale as some one approaches who could ruin her reputation, remove her from a position of trust, or break up her home if the secret were betrayed. Then, with an appealing look on her face, her finger is lifted to her lips to suggest silence; and the other, if noble-hearted and loyal, will lay her finger on her own lips in a solemn promise, as she turns away without any sign of recognition.

There is, of course, a sad dark side to all this glare of light, fury of wild excitement, splendour of costly costumes, and beauty of lovely flowers. The strains of perfect music do but drown the shrieks of wild despair, and the blaze of a million gas-jets can never break up the darkness that settles down on many a blasted life, ruined home, or perished honour. So complete is the control, so perfect the service, so well understood the necessity for discretion, that seldom does the suicide's sad end trouble the gay crowd of pleasure-seekers, still less find its way into the columns of the public journals. The amount of money spent annually by the administration in influencing

## La Côte d'Azur

certain sections of the press which might become troublesome is said to be enormous ; and, in any case, the desired result is usually obtained. There are few of us who have lived long in this fascinating neighbourhood yet have not known some friend come to utter grief through having yielded to the fatal passion, having been unable to stay his hand from the folly which would blight his future life. Fewer still have not seen or known cases so sad that the very memory of them calls up a feeling of acute pain. Even when life is left to the victim, how often has reason taken its departure ; and now the poor useless brain throbs ever to the fancied whirl of the roulette wheel, or the fleeting chances of the "rouge et noir."

Preachers may preach, purists may prate, and meddlers prescribe interference with everybody's business except their own ; but probably the one remedy for the undeniable evils of Monte Carlo would be the spread of simple common sense.

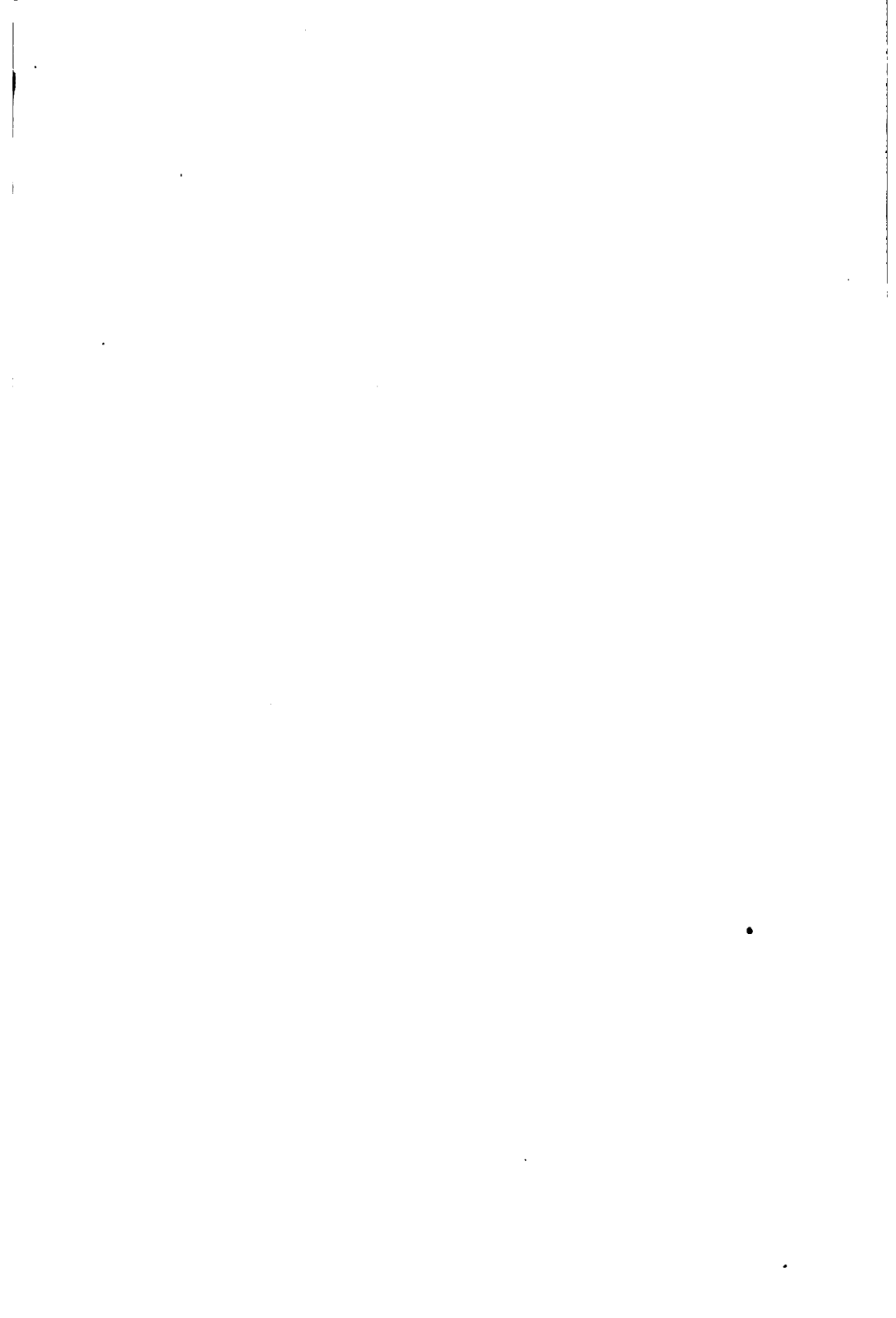
There are drives both to the east and to the west of Monte Carlo, but the most interesting excursion is probably that to La Turbie, made quite easily by the funicular railway. Those who love "views" will not be disappointed there, especially if they first proceed to "do" themselves very well at the restaurant commanding the principal prospect. They may even be able to see twice as much as other people if they take the proper precautions. La Turbie has a history which can boast of undisputed connection with early Roman times at one end, and a near connection with Monte

## Riviera

Carlo at the other. Its great tower, abominably mauled by the Maréchal de Villars, who ought to have known better, is a genuine and undisputed relic and record of the great Emperor Augustus. It was erected by him in commemoration of some of his victories over the inhabitants of the district, and stands on what was once the famous Roman road passing along this shore.

It is a pleasant drive from Monte to Mentone, the last of the celebrated resorts on the Côte d'Azur, the French portion of the Riviera. To refer for the third and last time to a certain French writer, we are told that "Menton est la ville où l'on se guérit," and it is true that for a considerable number of years its delightfully sheltered situation, soft air, and general favourableness have caused it to be preferred as a place of residence for an immense number of invalids who were in a serious condition of health. Probably the majority has always consisted of those who suffered from chest or lung troubles, but many others have also been sent there to recuperate even when their cases seemed desperate, and they have found satisfactory benefit from their sojourn.

The same sort of development, the same phase of evolution, noted elsewhere, has marked the history of Mentone. It is now a gay resort of crowds who have nothing worse the matter with them than not knowing what else to do but to amuse themselves, or how to get rid of their surplus cash. It is less lively than Nice, and perhaps gayer than Cannes, but has special charms





ENTRANCE TO CAMPOROSSO—WEST





## La Côte d'Azur

all its own, and on no account to be passed unobserved. The French adjective "coquette" exactly describes it from a certain point of view ; it has been affectionately called "la Perle de la France." The chief hotels can vie in expensiveness and extravagance with any others on the whole Riviera. It is the resort of many who do not care to leave word at home that they are going to Monte Carlo ; and the daily trip backwards and forwards can be comfortably made by tram without inconvenient relatives being any the wiser. In some respects it may be considered the most pleasing of all the places along the Riviera, and there are many who year by year return there in spite of the attractions offered by scores of other places elsewhere. The public gardens formed on the space procured by vaulting over the bed of the Carei stream, which runs through the town, are only equalled by those of Monte Carlo itself, and not approached by any others. In the neighbourhood are endless walks, drives, mountain climbs, and various other excitements. Carnival fêtes, flower shows, races, and cheap lectures are arranged to suit all tastes and several classes of purses ; but life there is not favourable to indulgence in poverty of any kind. Those of moderate means are not desired or encouraged at Mentone. The municipal authorities are fully alive to the necessity for rendering the place attractive to visitors—wealthy ones,—and few if any of these resorts are better managed than this. A French writer has even dared to suggest that the picturesque fishermen—and women—who patiently haul in their nets almost

## Riviera

daily along the great promenade, and seldom catch anything, but absolutely never exhibit any sort of distress or perturbation in consequence, are simply retained at the public expense in order to look charming, and pose for the amusement of the visitors.

To possess a villa in Mentone or its near neighbourhood is to approach very closely to living in an earthly paradise ; for the sheltered position due to the vicinity of the mountains, the fine character of these last, the excellence of the soil, the facility of cultivating an enormous variety of beautiful flowers, combine to make gardening a never-ending delight and to encourage a healthy out-door life.

Mentone possesses one feature of scientific and historic interest which deserves more than a passing notice, and appeals to a large class of those who know nothing of Art, and remain but slightly impressed by the beauties of Nature. Not only is it practically certain that the Roman road, or Via Aurelia, passed by there, but we find remains of prehistoric man carefully presented for our study or curiosity. Sir Thomas Hanbury has yet another title to the gratitude of many besides the few experts who have devoted time, skill, and energy to research in this very interesting direction. He has provided a building known as the *Museum Prehistoricum*, where relics found in the caves close at hand are preserved and classified under scientific direction. Some eight or nine caves have been discovered at one time or another, and unfortunately in some of them the explorations have been

## La Côte d'Azur

carried on without a due regard to those suitable methods dictated by expert experience or scientific direction, so that much of their value has been lost, but under Sir Thomas Hanbury's care there is no likelihood of previous mistakes being repeated.

An excellent little book on the subject<sup>1</sup> has been prepared, and should be studied by all visitors who are interested in this kind of research. The author very justly says that "the importance of these finds can only be properly appreciated by a small band of scientific specialists," but a considerable amount of valuable information can be obtained and absorbed by many who might not possess the ability to offer a critical opinion, or, still less, to carry on explorations for themselves.

Very few will be able to form any definite idea of the vast distances in time which separate us from the earliest period, or *Azoic* epoch, which scientists recognise in their special phraseology, nor are we much the wiser when they tell us that it was followed by the *Paleozoic* epoch, and this again by the Secondary or *Mesozoic*, passing thence into the Tertiary and Quaternary respectively before reaching what they are pleased to call the present epoch.

Nor are we allowed to flatter ourselves that this "present epoch" had its beginning anywhere near our own time. It dates back so far that we are weary of

<sup>1</sup> *The Men of the Barma Grande* (Baoussé Rossé), an account of the objects collected in the Museum Prehistoricum founded by Comm. Th. Hanbury, near Mentone. Translated from the French of Le Docteur R. Verneau. F. Abbo, Mentone, 1900.

## Riviera

the attempt long before we have fairly begun to realise what it really means. Then we are treated to disquisitions upon the approximate date at which man appeared on the scene, and we find more divisions and subdivisions to tax our memory ; though we seem to be getting, somehow, on to more familiar ground when our teachers begin reference to " the Stone Age, the Bronze Age, and the Iron Age." Surely the latter must be closely connected with Brummagem ! At all events, the first of these was once cleverly fixed, in our hearing, by a stout and well-favoured lady who was religiously doing her round, catalogue in hand, accompanied by the equally stout partner of her joys and sorrows, who evidently looked to her for all his information upon scientific and artistic matters. She was reading from the catalogue, and came upon the name " The Stone Age." " Stone Age ! What's that ?" said the plethoric husband. Instantly came the ready reply, " Oh, that was the age before the beginning of the world ! "

It is curiously interesting to see absolute and indisputable proof among the relics of the cave-dwellers of Mentone—it must have had another name at that time—that the elephant, rhinoceros, reindeer, and various other animals now extinct in this part of the world, wandered along these very shores. It seems hard that these poor cave-dwellers should have to be known by the appalling name of *trogloodytes*, which may be all right to the learned, but to the outsider suggests the very lowest depths of an absolutely unspeakable degradation.





ENTRANCE TO CAMPOROSSO—EAST





## La Côte d'Azur

The author of the work we have mentioned thus describes the characteristics of the earliest of these cave-dwellers :—"Small in stature, with low skull, receding forehead, and enormously thick superciliary ridges surmounting great round eyes, these individuals were prognathous and had receding chins. They seem, to judge from the shape of the thigh bone and tibia, to have been in the habit of walking with their legs slightly bent !"

If this surmise be correct, it is a very extraordinary coincidence that within the last few years training experts of the highest position should have endeavoured to teach us that for long-distance walking the bent-knee position is the best. Not only this, but the habit is said to have been introduced into the French army with extremely beneficial results. We may well say that "history repeats itself."

In addition to our wealthy compatriot, Sir Thomas Hanbury, other persons of more or less importance have contributed to the work of exploration. We read that "Prince Albert I. of Monaco recently commissioned the Abbé de Villeneuve to undertake methodical investigations in the seventh cave. His researches have resulted in discoveries of the greatest scientific interest." The Prince would probably be amused to learn of the interpretation put upon his efforts in the cause of scientific research by a serious and often trustworthy informant, who has solemnly assured us that he—the Prince—wanted to get hold of the skeletons from the caves because he thought *they might be those of his*

## Riviera

*ancestors* ! However this may be—and it would be a pity to destroy so picturesque a theory—it is a fact that “till 1846 the caves were actually within the Principality of Monaco. They are now in the Commune of Ventimiglia, below the village of Grimaldi.” It appears that there is still some further excavation to be done before the bottom of the cave near the Museum is reached, but that on the penultimate layer among those already explored, there were discovered evidences of the fires which had been lit by the dwellers. There were also remains of human handiwork: weapons and tools made of stone, bone implements and ornaments. In this layer were found human skeletons. “The bodies had been buried with their ornaments and a few implements.” The ornaments consisted of deers’ teeth, perforated and decorated with incised lines; vertebræ of fish and shells, with holes drilled in them; bone ornaments. One of the skeletons found showed signs of having been cremated on the spot.

There seems to be a considerable difference of opinion among experts as to the height of the figures represented by those skeletons; one taking one “co-efficient” as the basis of his calculations, and another taking another; but, on the whole, they must have been fairly tall men, the average being scarcely under six feet. Visitors who persist in taking their tape measure or their two-foot rule and trying to ascertain for themselves the length of the skeletons, should remember that in no case can they thus arrive at anything like

## La Côte d'Azur

a correct measurement. They make no allowance for the relaxation of the muscles in the prone position and after death, the partial detachment of the bones from their sockets, and the extension given by the flattening out lengthwise of the feet ; but they measure from the top of the skull to the extremity of the great toe—in a line with the leg—as if the figure had always stood upon tiptoe, and in a position of the foot quite impossible during life.

Dr. Verneau's remarks about the type of skull are worth careful study. His last amended opinion is that the interment of the individuals represented by these skeletons took place at "the close of *the reindeer age*, that is, the period immediately preceding our own." This is, of course, at a much later period than that to which the remains of the elephant and rhinoceros belong, but allows ample space for the exercise of even our wildest fancies as to the progress in evolution and civilisation which has taken place since then.



*On the shore, Bordighera.*



*San Remo from the Borigo Road.*

## CHAPTER VI

### VENTIMIGLIA TO SAVONA

Oh, that Love's quenchless power  
Might waft my voice to fill thy summer sky,  
And through thy groves the dying music shower,  
Italy! Italy!

MRS. HEMANS.

A FEW yards beyond Garavan, the easternmost portion of Mentone, is the historic *Pont Saint Louis*, which spans a gorge marking the boundary between Italy and France.

The frontier station is still Vintimille—Ventimiglia—about twenty minutes' run by train into Italian territory. It has an international character in so far as that the offices of both French and Italian custom-houses are side by side under the same roof, and the inspection of baggage takes place in the same department for both countries.

There is not much to choose between them as regards the trouble, annoyance, and loss of time caused to passengers; but it seems strange that with all our boasted advancement and civilisation we should be content to go on tolerating such a relic of barbarism

## Ventimiglia to Savona

as the present system. So long as real free trade or free exchange does not exist, so long must custom-houses of one sort or another continue to flourish, reasonably enough, for the duties to be paid on raw material, or large quantities of manufactured goods ; but it is no credit to the ruling powers of the various European countries that they should not have mutually consented to do away with the vexatious, annoying, and impertinent perquisitions, inspections, and spyings which now take place everywhere, as regards the personal baggage of *bona fide* travellers.

There is, besides, a pettifogging and absurd littleness about it all which should of itself be enough to condemn the system and cause its abolition. Nor can it be really said that one country is more to blame than another. Surely on such a trifling matter—trifling, that is, as regards the fiscal question involved—reciprocity might be arranged, to the mutual benefit of all parties.

The statistics of internal expenses as regards the upkeep of the custom-house establishments are not available to outsiders ; but it needs no great boldness to assert that they are considerably above the income produced by the present offensive spy system, so far as travellers and their baggage are concerned. There is no doubt that a positive saving to each state could be obtained by a more reasonable and liberal arrangement ; to say nothing of the moral gain involved in the triumph of decency and common sense.

It would naturally and inevitably remain within the right of the authorities in each country to examine



## Riviera

any baggage which might justify suspicions as to its legitimate character ; but what appreciable damage to the national income of any given country could be feared if here and there one—among travellers who are going to spend perhaps hundreds of sovereigns, or their equivalent, in that country, voluntarily enriching it to that extent—should carry in a pound or two of tea, a dozen or two of cigars, or a few yards of silk or lace ? They could not possibly import *tons* of dutiable merchandise or raw material in their handbags or dress-baskets ; and any attempt at smuggling on a large scale would be so self-evident as to court immediate detection. No amount of annoying inspection can ever entirely prevent the clandestine passage of a few small articles now and then ; and the whole system as it now prevails is silly as well as monstrously offensive.

Again, its absurdity is demonstrated by the very manner in which it is carried out ; by its inequality and unfairness. If every single bag or parcel were to be emptied and minutely examined, and the treatment were equal for all without exception, something might be said for it, at all events from that point of view. But for one article here and there to be opened upon a purely haphazard system—or want of system—is not only absurd but unfair. If the examination which does take place were thorough in all cases, it might be defended ; but the casual glance, which is often considered sufficient, does not discover the real contraband, nor justify the impertinence of prying into the character of a traveller's belongings, which are his business alone.



**AUTUMN TINTS IN THE CYPRESS VALLEY**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

Indeed, those persons who are accustomed to cross frontiers pretty frequently, and who do carry with them trifling things which might be considered dutiable, declare that the best way to have the box or trunk passed without a minute search is ostentatiously to throw it open and invite official inspection.

The exercise of this right of inspection now depends mainly, if not entirely, upon the idiosyncrasies, predilections, or prejudices of the various employés. These are in most countries chosen entirely from an ignorant and unsuitable class of persons, whose only qualification consists in the wearing of a uniform. That these "Jacks-in-office," who in ordinary social relations would be blacking our boots or sweeping our stable-yards, should have the power and authority to order this box to be opened and that bag to be emptied, and another parcel to be taken to pieces, after we have solemnly declared that there is *rien à déclarer*, or whatever the formula for the occasion may be, shows an utter failure to appreciate any sort of fitness of things ; and that on one occasion the inspector should walk down a long line of luggage marking every article as "passed," without making any examination, or even asking a single question, as sometimes happens ; while on the next occasion the same persons should be subjected to an annoying inquisition for the same articles, tends to make the whole procedure a blatant farce. We have not, in these parts, quite reached the refinement of civilisation, which prescribes that the inspector shall, on opening a bag, find a five-dollar bill

## Riviera

in imminent danger of attaching itself to his fingers (a circumstance which so horrifies the good man that he promptly turns away lest he should be confronted with other perils further down), but it is said that occasionally a palm is lubricated to facilitate the operation. Surely none but the worst of purists could consider this a very heinous offence against the laws of morality.

*Apropos* of the question of the difficulties encountered by travellers in regard to their luggage, many amusing and some serious stories are told. On one occasion a gentleman who had opened his box for inspection was brusquely ordered to remove the contents. He politely declined, saying that the officials were fully at liberty to make any examination they might choose. The chief inspector thereupon signed to one of his subordinates, who took the box, turned it upside down, and emptied out the whole of the contents pell-mell upon the counter and the floor. "Now you can put them back," said the bully. There was nothing dutiable found, but what with searching for the scattered things which had rolled here and there, and with packing them once more in some sort of order, the gentleman lost his train, and was put to serious inconvenience.

It is not long since another incident occurred at a certain Continental custom-house which shall, for obvious reasons, be nameless ; but which, properly understood, is capable of throwing considerable light on certain "shady" proceedings of which travellers sometimes have reason to complain.

An English lady was lunching at a restaurant close





IN THE NERVIA VALLEY—CASTLE OF THE DORIA





## Ventimiglia to Savona

to the custom-house, shortly before the departure of the train. Naturally she did not wish to be troubled about her somewhat extensive baggage, and—also naturally—asked a gentleman friend who was at hand to attend to the matter for her. He found the officials obdurate, and determined to see the inside of “Madame’s” trunks. This was reported to the lady, who could not find her keys; but, without disturbing the process of lunching, calmly and decisively said, “Oh, give the man a franc, and tell him to let them through!” (So like an Englishwoman abroad!) More efforts on the part of the gentleman were only met by more obduracy on the part of the officials. After a time one of the subordinates came to the rescue, and, producing a bunch of skeleton keys, said, “We know how to open these English locks.” In the presence of his superiors the trunks were opened, examined, and passed. They were relocked by the same official, the lady was not told how the matter had been managed, and peace reigned all round. We sometimes grumble—and wonder—at the robberies which take place on Continental railways—or some of them—but this is by the way.

Would it be too much to hope that some sort of “concerted action” on the part of the great Powers, who are continually meddling with some one else’s business, should be brought to bear on this question of the visitation of travellers’ luggage; a question interesting their own subjects; and one which a tiny modicum of common sense and ordinary intelligence would settle in five minutes, by the utter abolition

## Riviera

among all civilised nations of the present ridiculous and pestilent system.

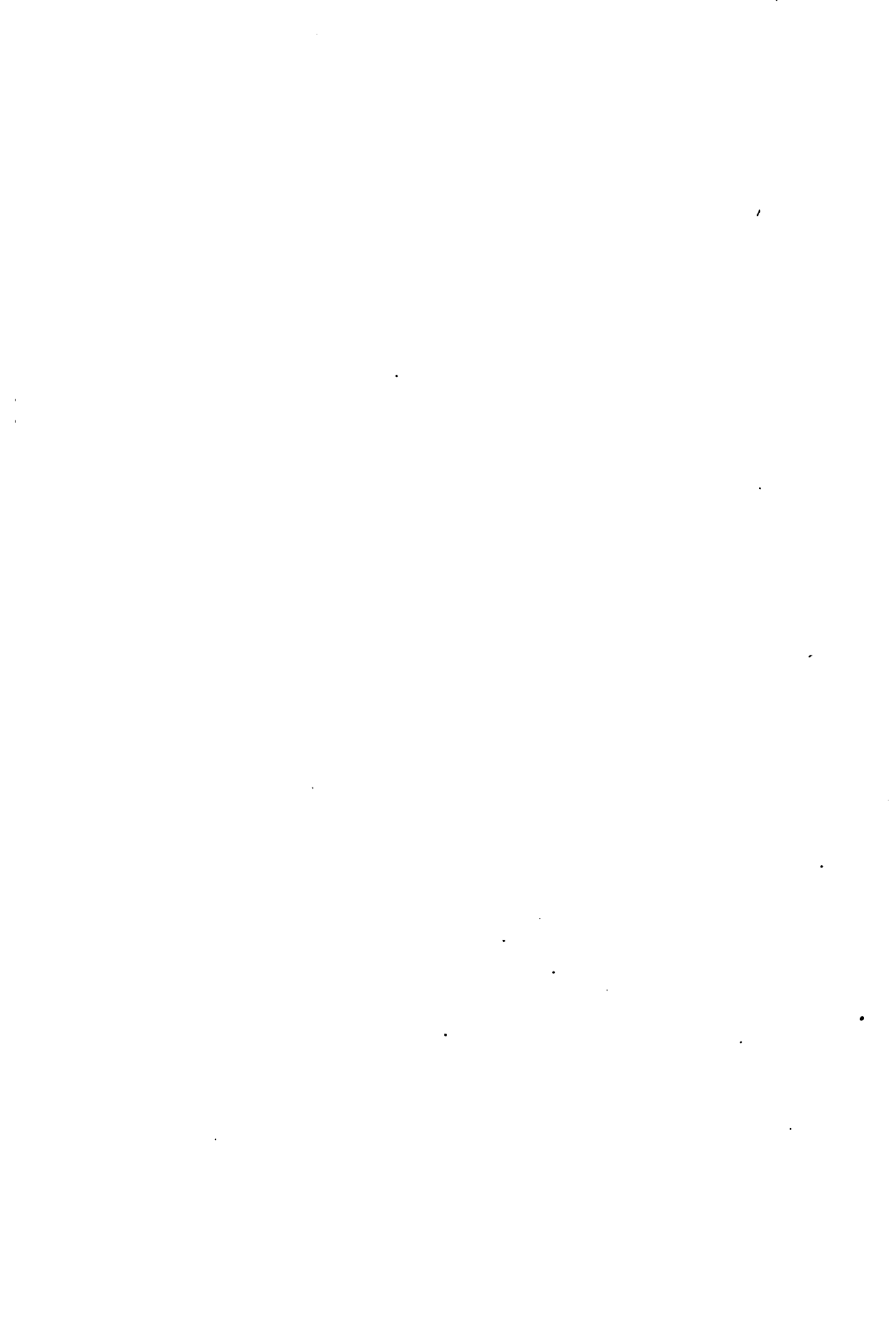
But the traveller's troubles are not over when he has got through the ordeal of the custom-house. He is hardly outside the station, and has scarcely taken his seat in carriage or hotel omnibus, when another official, or set of officials, comes upon the scene, and anew demands if there is anything to "declare." This is the man of the Octroi, or Dazio, according as we are in Italy or France, and sometimes, though more rarely, the whole business has to be gone through again: unlocking, opening, inspecting, closing, locking, replacing; till, finally, harassed and probably angry, the traveller is allowed to get away towards his destination.

How long is this farce to go on?

If, for instance, the Italian Association for the "Industry (!) of the Foreigners" (in other words, the Society recently formed for "exploiting" foreigners in the interest of the natives) wants to do some really useful work, let it take up this question of the travellers' baggage at the frontier; and it may benefit, not foreigners only, but also its own compatriots, by inducing the authorities to institute a more reasonable set of regulations.

In short, the personal luggage of all *bona fide* travellers should be allowed to pass from one country to another as a matter of course, without any formality whatever.

If this were reciprocal no loss would arise to either country; and it would be easy to make—through the



DOLCEACQUA, WITH THE CASTLE OF THE DORIA





1-1-1

## Ventimiglia to Savona

railway companies—a small charge, if necessary, in the shape of a tax on “excess luggage” over a certain weight, to satisfy bureaucratic susceptibilities.<sup>1</sup>

Sometimes the results of the present system are more comic than serious. Passing through the custom-house at Ventimiglia some years ago with a portfolio of etchings, an artist found the Italian officials courteous enough, as it happened, but at a loss under what category to class his wares, and how to adjudicate the duty. Having been made to wait until all the other passengers had been disposed of, he was invited into the office, and a discussion ensued. Books of reference and other authorities were consulted, while in the meantime the whole staff of the establishment became interested, and the proofs were handed round from one employé to another for inspection, at an imminent risk of undesired *retroussage*—shall we say—from dirty fingers. Some of the observations made were decidedly flattering to the artist's pride; while others were indifferent, quaint, or merely neutral. Finally, an official hit upon an ingenious solution of the difficulty. In order to judge of their value, the etchings *were all piled upon the scales and weighed!* The result was none too flattering. They were indeed “weighed in the balances and found wanting,” for as they did not overpass a certain number of *kili*, it was decided that they might go through duty free.

<sup>1</sup> Since the above was written, the Italian Government has practically recognised that unnecessary inconvenience does take place; for it has recently issued instructions that the examination of baggage at its frontier is not to be “vexatious.”

## Riviera

This method of treating art work may be recommended to not a few selection committees—perhaps even, very respectfully, to certain art critics—as being a useful and expeditious way of judging, calculated to save them a deal of trouble; and being on the whole quite as fair as many of the other systems now in use.

The trains run between Mentone and Ventimiglia, though on Italian territory, are entirely French, with the exception of certain *trains de luxe*, such as the “Petersburgh-Vienna-Nice-Cannes.” Before entering the frontier station, and after emerging from the last tunnel, they cross the valley of the Roya, varied and delightful for excursions. To most it would seem to have been specially suited as a natural line of division between France and Italy, but the exigencies of political rivalry, or the fortunes of war, have fixed the same on an imaginary line starting from Mentone and crossing the Roya in several places.

An inconvenient result is that in making long excursions up this valley it is necessary to undergo, several times within a short distance, all the annoyance of rival custom-houses with their usual formalities. The drive is a pleasant one, the scenery fine, and picturesque places are in view. Some persons find San Dalmazzo—the chief goal of trips in this valley—to be pleasing, at all events in late spring and summer. It is certainly quiet, “out of the world,” shut in among mountains, and high up above the sea-level.

There is an abundant supply of most excellent water at the service of enthusiastic total abstainers; to say

## Ventimiglia to Savona

nothing of perfect honey and pure milk, but good wine is also to be had ; and the modest hotel caters very fairly for its guests. Villas, too, or cottages, can be had by families intending to make a long stay ; but, on the other hand, many visitors find in San Dalmazzo, after a few days' sojourn, an air of intolerable dulness and melancholy. It does well as a stopping-place, if one is undertaking the journey from the French Riviera to Cuneo, Turin, and the Italian Lakes ; or wishes to return northward by the Mont Cenis tunnel.

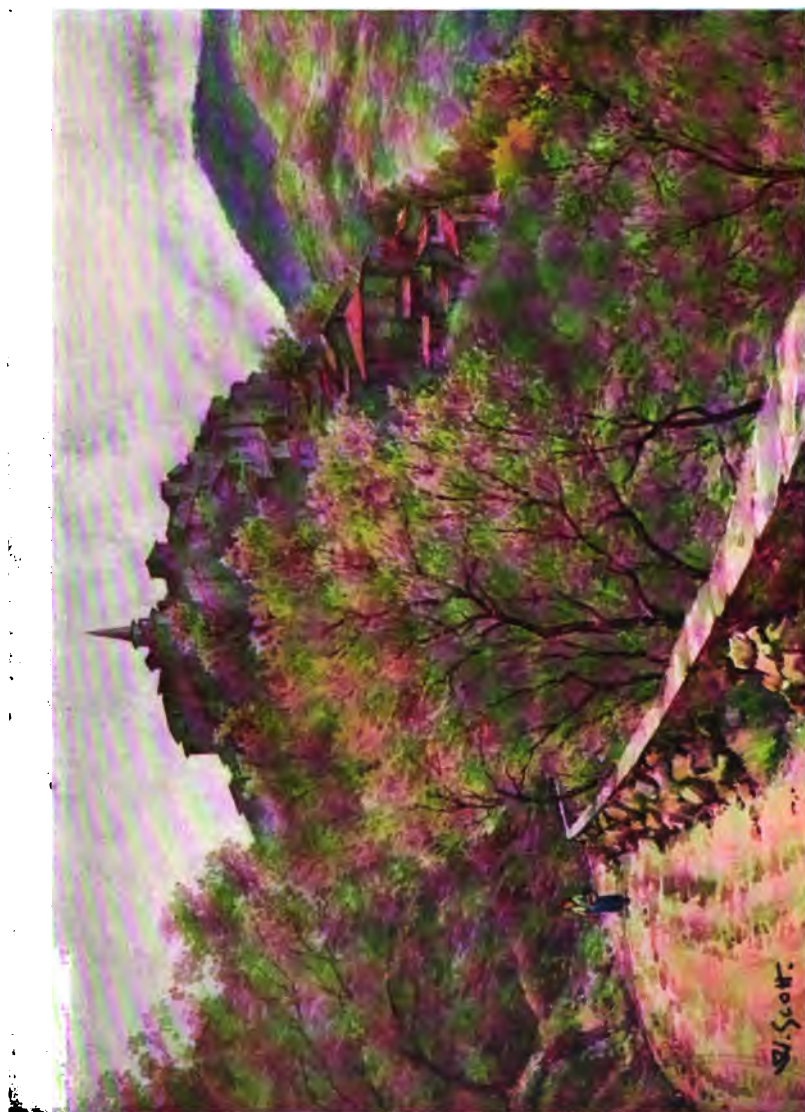
At the mouth of the Roya stands old Ventimiglia, picturesquely situated on the hillside ; dominated by Castel d'Appio, which is said to take its name from Appius Claudius ; and has remains of work seemingly of Roman character. The church of San Michele is curious and interesting both inside and outside, the latter especially so as seen from the banks of the stream. The curious dark, steep, winding streets in the older part of the town are worth a visit, and give an idea of those to be found later in many places along the Italian Riviera. Ventimiglia is not a place for foreigners to stay at, in spite of its general air of prosperity and a decided effort to " move with the times." There is as yet a lack of suitable hotel accommodation, but there are a few restaurants near the station, for chance travellers. By train, electric trams—with an excellent service under English direction—or by carriage, visitors will pass on to make their headquarters at Bordighera or San Remo. Distant from each other only a score of minutes by train, of these two places it may be said

## Riviera

that in some respects each is the antithesis of the other, though sharing the same natural advantages of climate. San Remo is smart, lively, "up-to-date," and decidedly progressive. Bordighera is the place of lost opportunities. Chosen in the first instance as a delightfully quiet resort where all the charms of the country could be enjoyed to the full, without the disturbing influences of large towns; there was an unfortunate tendency among the early foreign residents to resent and oppose every proposed or possible improvement, every desirable development; and to grumble everlastingly at even the most inevitable growth. Needless to say, expansion has taken place in spite of all opposition, especially in the building of hotels; but the local authorities, only too glad of an excuse for doing nothing to help or direct the natural movement, have taken no care to secure that the unavoidable alterations should proceed upon well-ordered lines, with due regard to the future well-being of the whole community. Thus they have allowed matters to go on at haphazard, and only taken care to increase the local taxes on those articles which foreign visitors specially desire. The hotel-keepers alone—and many of them are foreigners—have shown energy and initiative, in spite of the obstacles placed in their way. Praiseworthy efforts have also been made by a small society of private individuals to supply the wants ignored by the authorities. So that while the rural character of Bordighera has been to a great extent lost, no proper or ordered development has taken its place. By comparing it with its near neighbour Mentone,



APRICALÉ, FROM THE WEST





1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who were present at the meeting. The names are listed in alphabetical order.

## Ventimiglia to Savona

one can see at a glance what French administration would have done for its enormous possibilities and opportunities.

Originally founded by settlers from Ventimiglia, the present old town—the *Citta Alta*—was the offspring of its near neighbour Borghetto, and dates from 1470. It was under the rule of the Republic of Genoa, whose *stemma* or shield is still to be seen over its principal gateway, the *Porta Sottana*, at the end of the Via Dritta. Till recently this street, steep and stepped, for pedestrians only, was one of the most picturesque “bits” in the neighbourhood, with its fine group of ancient cypresses and its beautiful look-out over the sea. It used to be sketched by every person who was capable (and by many who were obviously incapable) of manipulating a brush or pencil. Alas! the historic trees have disappeared, and the scene is given over to the most commonplace ugliness of modern jerry-building.

As a health resort, Bordighera deserved a better fate than has fallen to it, for its air is particularly health-giving and strengthening. While some profess to find its neighbour Mentone rather relaxing, this can in no way be said of Bordighera. At the same time it is singularly free from the keen cold which so many love to call “bracing,” though to ordinary mortals it is simply offensively depressing.

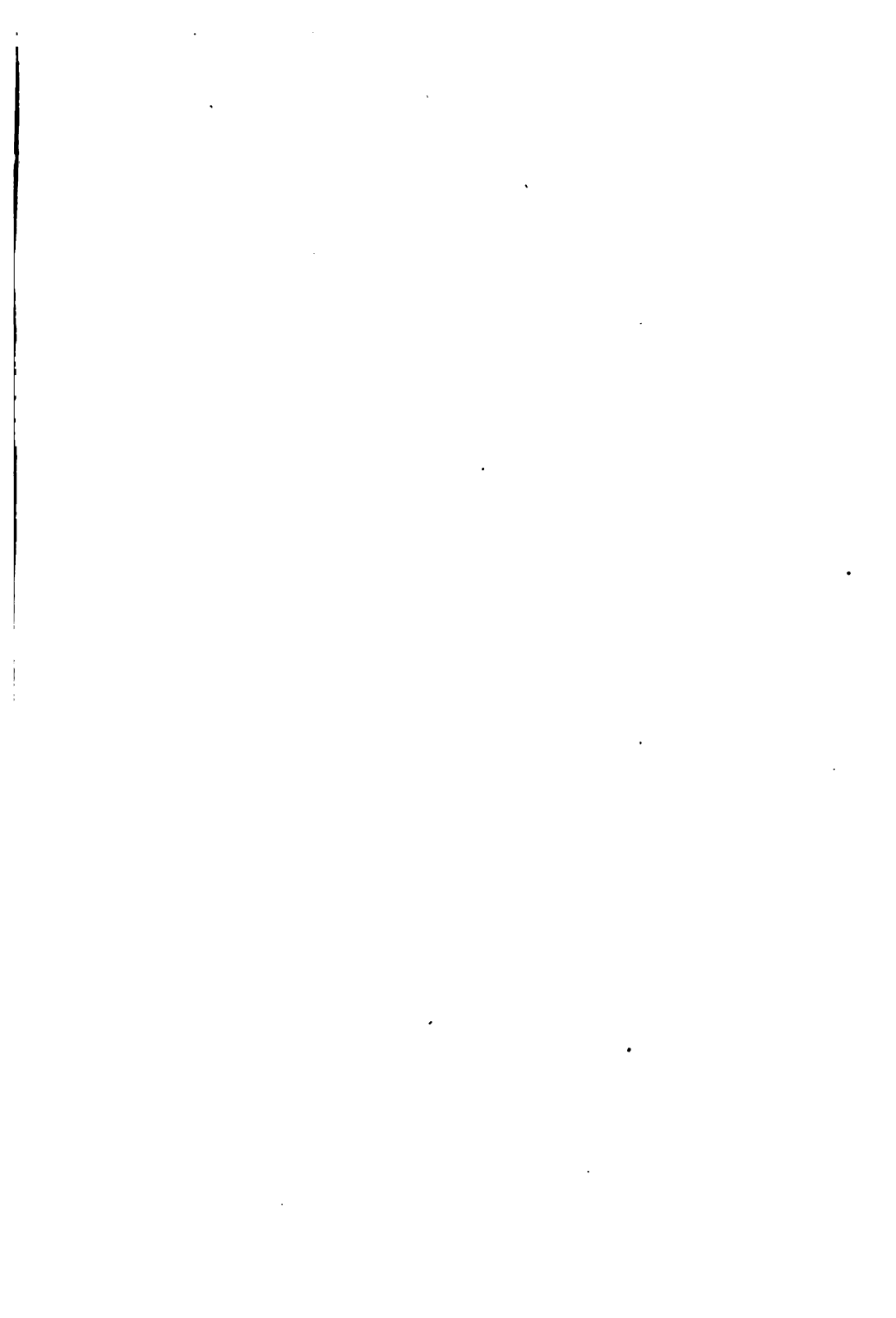
Nature has provided Bordighera with easily realisable opportunities for a magnificent promenade along the shore extending from the Capo Sant Ampeglio to

## Riviera

Ventimiglia, a distance of five or six kilometres, with superb views of the French coast all the way. Unfortunately the authorities are utterly indifferent, if not openly antagonistic; in spite of the millions of *lire* annually spent in Bordighera by visitors; while those foreign residents who frankly confess that they "want to keep the place quiet" are only too ready to encourage inaction. In this way an opportunity for becoming a worthy rival of Mentone, Nice, or Cannes, and thus giving to the Italian Riviera what the French Riviera has long possessed, is persistently and deliberately neglected, without any corresponding advantage. It is obvious that in this way not only is damage done to the place itself, but to the district as a whole, and indirectly to the entire peninsula.

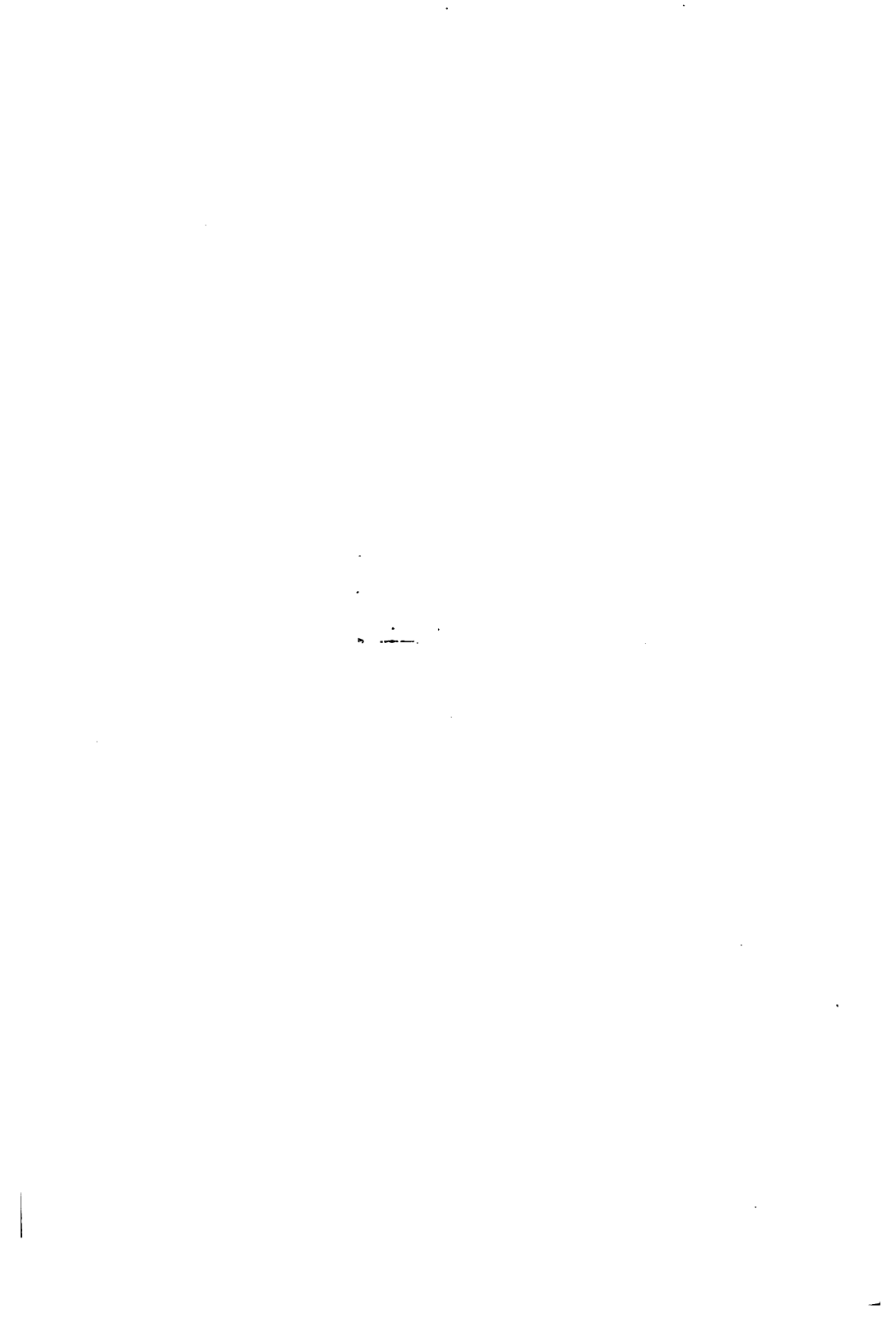
There is still one feature of which those who have hitherto selfishly impeded its progress could not deprive it, and that is its position as an unrivalled centre for excursions. Scarcely any other place on the Italian Riviera can offer so much in the way of pleasant places for picnics, glorious drives, picturesque villages, and scenes of historical interest, within a limited radius. Her Imperial Majesty the late Empress Frederick found it delightful in this respect; and the fact that it was chosen for the temporary residence of our own Gracious Sovereign, the late Queen Victoria, in the last year of her life (all preparations having been made for her reception), proves that its reputation in this respect is not rated too high.

Twenty minutes' tram ride brings one to the Roya



**STREET IN APRICALE**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

Valley already referred to. Half this distance shows the opening of the Nervia Valley, with its innumerable points of interest, its villages, and its excursions on foot across the hills in every direction. Here lie Camporosso, Dolceacqua—with the ruined Doria Castle still crowning it—Rochetta Nervina on its rushing torrent, Isolabona picturesque and sleepy; Pigna with its interesting mediæval church and curious vaulted passage-ways; Castel Vittorio on the height above it, and Buggio a couple of hours' walk away. Eastwards from "Isola" lies the unrivalled Apricale, the pearl of the entire Riviera for quaint old-world loveliness and picturesque charm. The remains of its castle still dominate the village, and its people are gentler, more trustworthy, and more industrious than any of their neighbours, as if they belonged to another race.

Northwards again from Apricale, but to be reached on this side only by rough mule-paths, is Bajardo, made memorable for ever by the catastrophe of 1887, when an earthquake brought down the vaulting of the church while service was proceeding, and over two hundred victims were buried in the ruins.

Opposite to Apricale on the east, and high above it, lies Perinaldo—*Podius Rainaldi*—in a magnificent situation, looking right away over the valley to the sea.

If we descend that valley in returning we shall pass Soldano, where the once busy looms are now idle; San Biagio, famous for its excellent wine, both white and red; and curious little Vallecrosia, some of its old walls



## Riviera

still standing with their loopholes for defence, as in the days when the savage "Barberi" ravaged these coasts, and when the Commune served out a gun and so many pounds of powder and lead to each adult male inhabitant, that he might defend his hearth and home against the pirates. On the crest of the hill to the right is Santa Croce, scene of many a delightful picnic when the spring days are bright.

Close to Bordighera is the pretty valley of Borghetto with its village of that name, and beyond it Vallebona. On the crest of the eastern ridge lies the tiny and picturesque Sasso, giving its name to the other valley bordered at the farther side by Monte Nero. Far away up this valley is Seborga, once the property of the monastery of S. Honorat in the island opposite Cannes. Here the monks had the privilege of minting their own coins ; and came to grief through entrusting their work to a Protestant.

Cross walks in all directions can be undertaken without the fear of meeting noisy and dust-raising motor cars, for there are no carriage roads as yet, though the natives are clamouring for them, and perhaps their construction may not be long delayed.

Coming back to Bordighera and passing round its delightful Capo Sant Ampeglio, whence the French coast is seen stretching far far away to the very horizon where the blue Esterelles dip into the sea, the Corniche road runs towards Ospedaletti and San Remo. On the heights to the left is Colla, *Col de' Rodi*, once belong-

## Ventimiglia to Savona

ing to the Knights Templars, picturesquely situated, but possessing no great interest beyond its curious collection of old pictures and books.

A lovely drive is this, winding under olives, up and down the hills, always in sight of the sea, by rose-gardens and palm-groves, among carnations by millions, and the graceful *Mimosa Dealbata* with its wealth of golden flowers.

Ospedaletti, exploited by a French company, and consequently laid out with due regard to order and the future, was to have been a miniature Monte Carlo, but the Italian Government intervened, and perhaps another potent influence may have been at work to prevent an unwelcome rivalry. The Casino exists, but the "Roulette" and "Rouge et noir" are wanting. Concerts—often excellent ones—are given here regularly during the season (Tamagno, who had a villa in the place, sometimes sang there—at all events for charity), and the neighbouring towns supply the audience. This is indeed a quiet resort, where absolute rest and the absence of excitement can be obtained; while the most delicate invalids cannot complain of the want of sheltering hills round this charming little sun-trap.

On the way to San Remo still stands the little "Osteria del Mattone" mentioned in Ruffini's well-known story *Doctor Antonio*, which every one who has visited this district is supposed to have read, and which has done so much to make Bordighera known.

Once within the limits of San Remo we begin to find an improvement, slight perhaps but perceptible,

## Riviera

in the quality of the roads, for the Communal authorities have at last grasped the fact that good roads are desirable in an age of bicycles and motor cars, though a deal more remains to be done. The town itself is bright, cheerful, and possessed of some fairly smart shops of the kind our wives and sisters love. No other description of them is required. Then there is a new Kursaal or Casino—flamingly new at present—designed, needless to say, by a French architect, and carried out under French influence. There are promenades, a public garden with a band, and a bathing establishment.

The sojourn here of the late Emperor Frederick when Crown Prince has drawn the attention of Germans to San Remo, and they crowd there in considerable numbers. There is an ample supply of doctors, and—a treasure of inestimable value to unfortunate sufferers—a real English Nursing Home, under the most perfect management, and in a lovely situation. It is almost worth while to get ill—"just a bit, don't you know, and in bad weather"—to have an excuse for going to stay there.

There are two English churches, suiting "High" and "Low" convictions, a most desirable arrangement for several reasons not exclusively connected with religious opinions; though, as Dean Pigou in his fascinating book<sup>1</sup> gently hints, they have a tendency to "run the Dean against the Marquis," in the race for the visitor's patronage. The misfortune of having

<sup>1</sup> *Odds and Ends*, by Dean Pigou.



**OSPEDALETTI**



1. 1. 1.

## Ventimiglia to Savona

only one church in a fashionable resort of this kind is fully exhibited in certain other places not a thousand miles away, where the tyranny of a small clique is in full swing, undisturbed by healthy rivalry or the possibility of schism. There petticoat government is supreme ; and the idle gossip of the tea-table decides the destiny of any unfortunate individuals who have been marked out for opposition. In some cases the Bishop of Gibraltar has been obliged to interfere. More power to his Lordship's elbow ! There is still some vigorous sweeping to be done.

San Remo also possesses a good sports club, and—in the neighbourhood of Taggia—convenient golf links, which have recently passed under new management and are well spoken of.

There are fewer excursions to be made directly from San Remo than from Bordighera, but Ceriana is worth a visit, and Bajardo is more conveniently reached from that place than from Apricale. The walk from the point where the carriage stops is not a long one. To Verezze is a pleasant trip up a narrow valley, past a chocolate factory ; and the old bridge is a favourite subject for sketchers.

No one should omit a visit to the ruins of Bussana, another terrible witness to the horrors of the earthquake of 1887, and now utterly abandoned. Though a fair proportion is still fit for habitation, no one can be found to live there ; and a new town, Bussana Nuova, has been erected on the shore. So strong is the prejudice against the old place that even a trifling relic



## Riviera

carried away from the ruins is said to bring inevitable disaster to its possessor.

Taggia can be reached by carriage, cycle, or train. As regards the railway, there is a station of that name on the line, at a distance of about three kilometres (say nearly a couple of miles), and rough omnibuses run up and down for a few *sous*. Most visitors to this part of the Riviera have heard of Taggia, and some can speak feelingly of its special characteristics. One charming lady, passing by in the train, was heard to say to her companion : " That's the place where Marion Crawford laid the plot of his novel, *Dr. Antonio*. The real name of the hero was Ruffini, who actually lived there." *Voilà, comme l'on écrit l'histoire !*

The home of the Ruffini family may still be seen in Taggia, and the inhabitants are proud of the exile's reputation, while they carefully cherish his memory. He took refuge in England in consequence of political difficulties at home : a polite way of saying that the Government of the day objected to being upset by malcontents who persisted in demanding inconvenient reforms. Giovanni seems to have had a hard struggle at first in the land of his exile, but he mastered its language thoroughly, and was not ungrateful for the shelter afforded him. A number of interesting letters written by him from England to his mother and sister in Italy were published for the first time some twenty years ago,<sup>1</sup> but they are apparently little known to English readers. They overflow with expressions of

<sup>1</sup> B. E. Maineri, *Ingaunia* : Roma, Forzani, 1884.

## Ventimiglia to Savona

tender affection for those belonging to him, and reveal the hardships which he and his brother Agostino had to undergo in their endeavours to get a living in England. A few brief extracts may perhaps lead some to desire a closer acquaintance with this charming correspondence. He writes from 26 *Clarendon Square*, on the 11th of April 1840, to his "dear and good mamma," and sends news of Agostino, whose engagement as a teacher—apparently in some school in Edinburgh—was to end at the close of that month, and to be taken up again in the following October. After referring to the illness of his father he goes on :—

However, guess !—I can't refrain from telling you, and thus robbing him of the pleasure of giving you a treat—he has just got two lessons, one for French, the other for Italian.

Perhaps he won't want to tell you anything, you understand, because two lessons are a small affair, and then with the end of the season they also will probably stop ; but it is something that he has succeeded in breaking the charm which seemed to cross him here, where after about three years of efforts he was still at the same point, that is at zero. And guess a bit. . . . To whose recommendation does he owe the acquaintance that has procured him the two pupils ? No less than the recommendation—unknown to him—of Lord James Stuart. Now, then, as I like to be just, and to give to each his deserts, I tell you this to satisfy my conscience ; as I remember having spoken to you of that gentleman with a certain bitterness, in consequence of his rather bad behaviour about us. I suppose he must have had a moment of remorse of conscience, and may have taken up his pen in that moment ; anyhow, I, who am made of soft stuff, and can't bear rancour for four hours against any living being, have felt my whole heart—which at bottom tries only

## Riviera

to love—soften in his favour ; and, indeed, at the first opportunity I shall go and do my duty, and thank him for my brother and also for myself.

He then speaks of the favourable reception accorded to his brother in Edinburgh :—

Add to this that last Sunday I made the acquaintance of Mr. and Mrs. Carlyle, those two good people, the lady especially, who have interested themselves so much in our young friend. . . .

Then follow expressions of passionate love for his mother, and his longing to be with her and share her sorrow :—<sup>1</sup>

God sees my heart, and you also, my darling, you can read in it as in a book. No one ever loved as I love you,<sup>2</sup> no sacrifice in the world would cost me [too much] to save you one tear ; but Fate has willed that I should neither save them to you, nor even render a single one of them less bitter. But as it is thus, it is because the Lord has willed it so, and what He orders is ordered for the best. We are in a world of thorns and afflictions ; many are the worries and heartbreaks before reaching the goal. But once in refuge there, no more troubles, no more sadness, but eternal love and felicity. There we shall smile at ourselves, thinking no more of those painful events which, in the short-sightedness of our intellect, we called immense and irreparable. At certain moments I feel a faith so lively, and an aspiration so strong, towards this blessed haven, that I forget the world, and as it were a pure light spreads over my soul, which it floods with ineffable consolation. To you, so good, so pure, so weary of the struggle, these

<sup>1</sup> His father's death was apparently expected at any moment.

<sup>2</sup> In the original the second person singular is used throughout.

## Ventimiglia to Savona

momentary loosening from the earth, these intuitions, must, I trust, happen more frequently and consolingly. . . . I commend you to the Mother of the Seven Sorrows, and to your Guardian Angel. Adieu, O best, most unhappy, but most loved of mothers. . . .

Under the same date is a letter to his sister, in which—supposing “the worst to have happened”—he gives the tenderest suggestions for the care of their mother. She is to be removed at once from the house of death, and to be kept as much alone as possible. He says:—

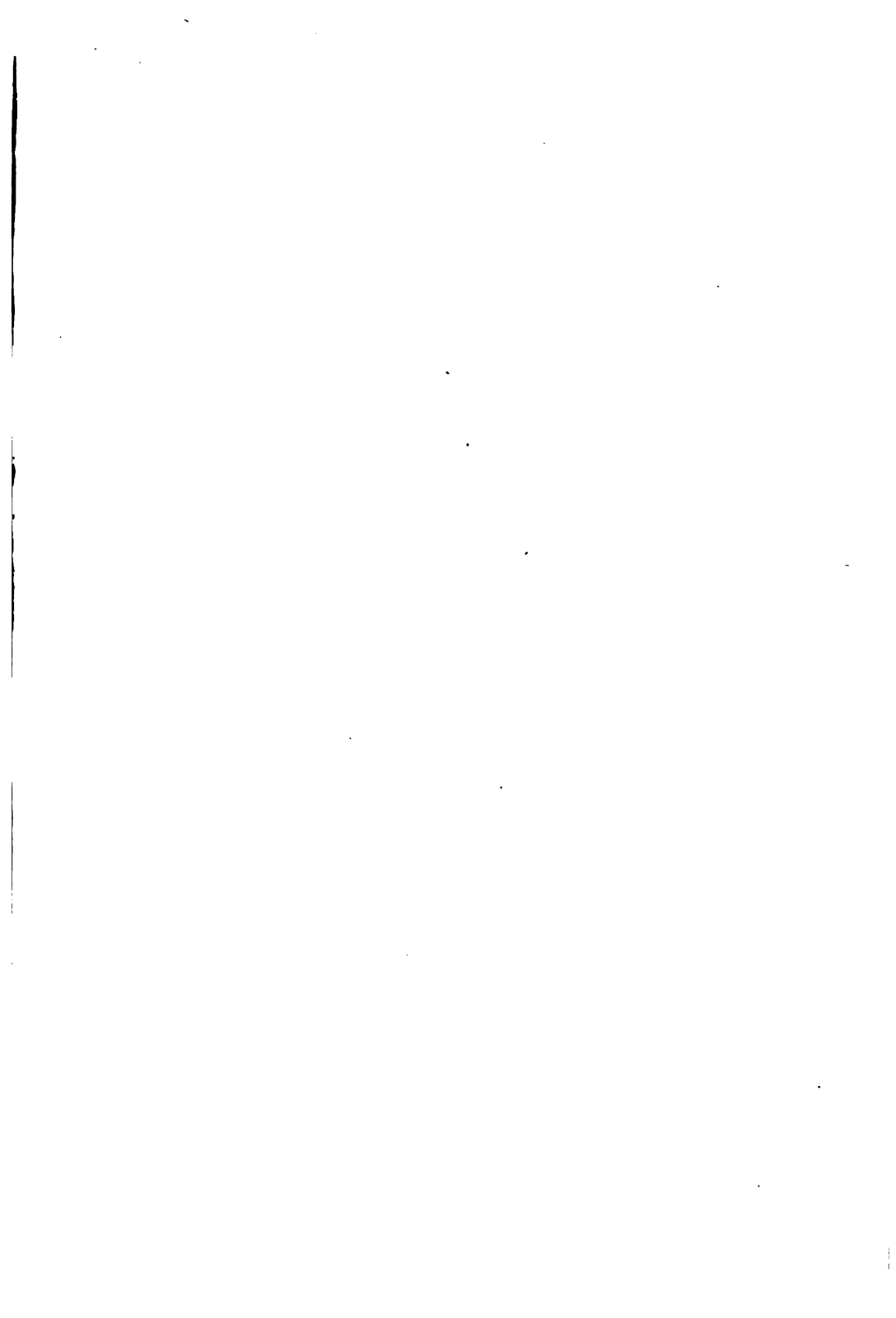
There is a sort of shame in real sorrows, and with strong minds like that of our mother, that should be respected. . . . Let her tears flow freely, and speak to her of us often, and always;—of us poor unhappy ones who love her so much. And if she refuses you anything, say to her, “And poor Giovanni? and poor Agostino?” Make her think of her own health. . . . Would it cost much to have a bath in the house? Baths would do her so much good. Oh, if you had the conveniences that there are here in London! I trust that your good qualities will have procured for you sufficient influence over your husband, and the family in general, for you to be able, without opposition on their part, to carry out what I tell you. . . .

Taggia at the time of the annual fair is interesting to those who are not afraid of a little bustle, mixed with a dash of old-world quaintness. Peasants come in from the hill villages round, bringing their mules, their cattle, or their garden produce for sale or exchange. Here, too, may often be seen, according to the season, a habit which seems to us unusual, but which prevails also in some of the villages in the French Riviera

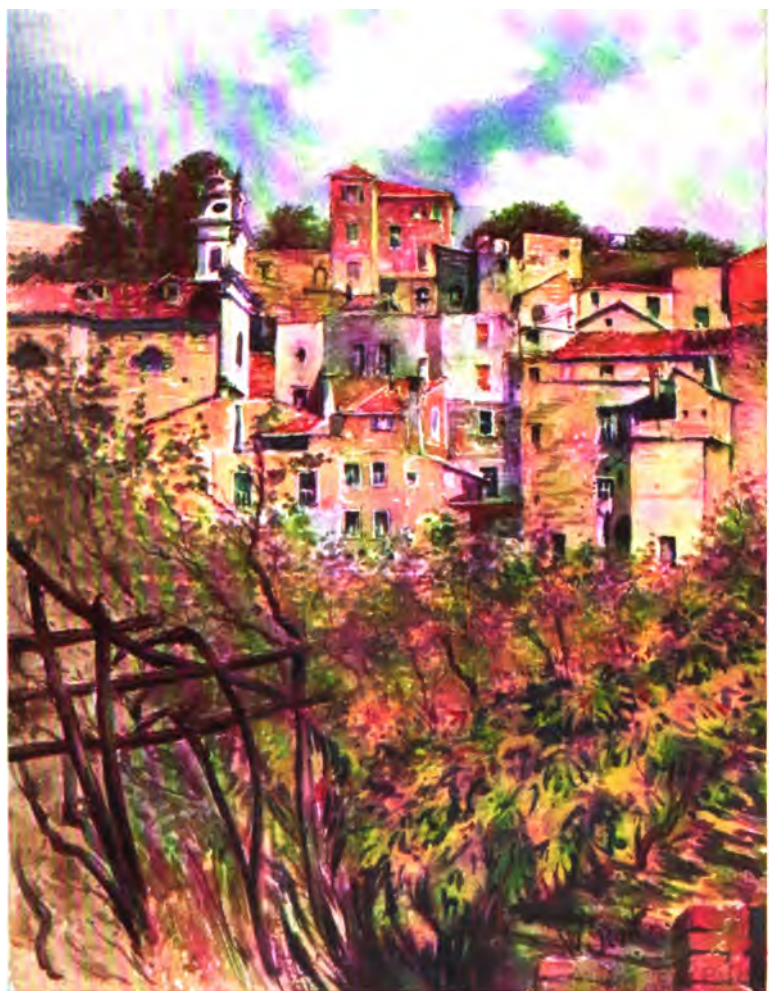
## Riviera

within visitors' reach, such as Vallauris or Biot. Many of the householders have small quantities of fruit or vegetables to dispose of ; and instead of taking them to a dealer or shopkeeper, they are placed outside the houses by platefuls at, say, one or two *sous* the piece. If a passer-by is desirous of purchasing, he simply takes the object and places the coins on the plate. It says volumes not only for the honesty of the inhabitants as a whole, but also for their trust in one another, that such a system should still prevail. Often even the richer people of the village are not above disposing of their surplus produce in this way ; and though they are in no hurry to pose as shopkeepers or publicly advertise their wares, they may sometimes be seen furtively glancing from a corner of the window, and sending one of their family to gather in the coppers and replenish the supply of goods.

About ten miles beyond Taggia is a town of some importance, Porto Maurizio, or, as its inhabitants simply call it, Porto, the chief town of the province, and the seat of the Prefecture. It occupies a commanding position ; was once, like most of its neighbours, entirely surrounded by walls ; its foundation is of great antiquity, and it has a pleasant air of modernity and progress. It is very jealous of its near neighbour and rival, Oneglia, and the jealousy is reciprocated with interest. Sometimes the feeling gets beyond mere jealousy and becomes more serious. No doubt this is in part hereditary, for in former days Porto Maurizio was under the domination of Genoa, while Oneglia was ruled from Piedmont.



PART OF THE OLD TOWN, SAN REMO







## Ventimiglia to Savona

There is no reason why Porto's legitimate aspiration to become a resort for foreign visitors, and thus share the fortunes of San Remo and Alassio, should not be achieved. Its air is strong and bracing, and should therefore suit some of those—and they are not few—who find, or think they find, these latter towns deficient in that respect. These may be said to include those who are well, and seek amusement with change of air ; and those who are not ill enough to need extreme care in the choice of a residence.

Till now an important drawback has been the utter want of suitable accommodation for visitors, the modest Hotel de France being all that was available. Now, however, there has been constructed, upon the best modern principles, a fine large building called the Grand Hotel de la Riviera, on a splendid position facing the sea, though high above it.

Porto can boast of a really fine theatre—named after Cavour—the property of the Municipality, and one of the best to be found anywhere along the coast. Unfortunately, it is so much superior to the present requirements of the place as to form a decided “white elephant” to its owners. It seems impossible to make it pay ; and the usual stories are told of impecunious *impresarii* suddenly disappearing in the middle of their term, and “forgetting” to pay the salaries of their artistes. Of course the Municipality has to give a subvention, without which nothing could be so much as undertaken ; and sometimes a really good company makes its appearance for a time in Italian Opera. The

## Riviera

provisions for ready exit in case of fire or panic are far in advance of those usually found in Italian theatres.

The drop-scene, an unusually good composition, was painted by Massabò, a well-known painter of the last century, contemporary of Mazzini, Cavour, and other leaders of the United Italy movement; and he has included their portraits in his composition.

There are pleasant excursions, drives, and walks in abundance to be made in nearly all directions, not only along the famous Corniche road, which runs through the place, but up some of the valleys and across the hills.

The town itself is lively and gay, has as much sunshine as San Remo, and a more energetic life. Its port is considered a refuge of the first class, and yachts can lie quite comfortably at anchor in its shelter. Several well-known Italian yachtsmen have their boats here during the season, and large numbers of Italian visitors come for the bathing.

In the place itself there are no buildings of surpassing interest, either ancient or modern. The pretentious cathedral, or church of Saint Maurice, erected at the beginning of the last century, is but one among the many plaster shams which for so long have represented modern Italian architecture; but it is spacious, lofty, and not at all badly proportioned. Its pictures are mostly unworthy of attention, except the "Martyrdom of S. Sebastian"—first altar to the left on entering—by Podesti. The choir stalls may also be noticed.

Down below, in the old town along the shore, are remains, valuable from a historical and archæological

## Ventimiglia to Savona

point of view, of an old church of the Knights of Malta. It is without a roof and in a deplorable condition, but if it escape its threatened destruction, or the equally disastrous restoration—so called—a visitor should not omit seeing it, and noticing the early character of its three-apsed east end. There is an inscription on a slab on the north wall which records that the building was restored by a Count of Languedoc in 1665. The old convent of Santa Chiara, in the highest part of the town, has nothing of interest beyond a rather picturesque tower at the angle towards the sea.

A short distance from this building is a little church dedicated to S. Peter, part of which, by a cruel irony of fate, was once a windmill for grinding corn.

Lower down, in the old palace of the Marchesi Maglioni, is a fine hall with frescoes by Carrega on walls and vaulting. They are good of their kind, and in excellent preservation.

The Avv. E. Ramone has a collection of old pictures which he courteously allows to be seen on application.

Half an hour's walk along the road which leads past the Prefecture will bring us to the pretty village of Artallo, whence a capital view of "Porto" is obtained; and the village itself offers several little subjects to the sketcher. There are no natural wonders, no startling antiquities, but quiet and restfulness.

In another direction, up the Vasio Valley, a pleasant drive of about three-quarters of an hour—the latter half a moderately steep ascent—brings us to

## Riviera

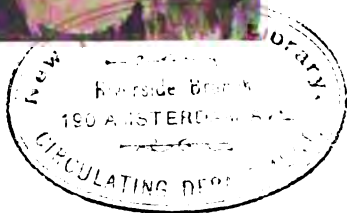
the village of Monte Grazie. We leave the carriage and walk for a quarter of an hour up an easy mule-path to the church of N.S. delle Grazie, one of the few old churches of the district still retaining ancient form and character. It has somehow escaped the destructive hand of the plasterer, and is entirely in wrought stone. There is a graceful western portal with slender columns and an inscription—perhaps not in its original position—over the doorway. It runs as follows :—

. M . CCC . L . A DIE .  
XXI . MARCI . HOC  
HOPVS . FECIT . FIE  
RI . PHILIPVS . AN  
CERMVS . ET . ANT  
ONIVS . MORVS . MA  
SARII . ECCLEXIE . SA  
NTA . MARIA . DEI . GR  
ACIA . AMEN.

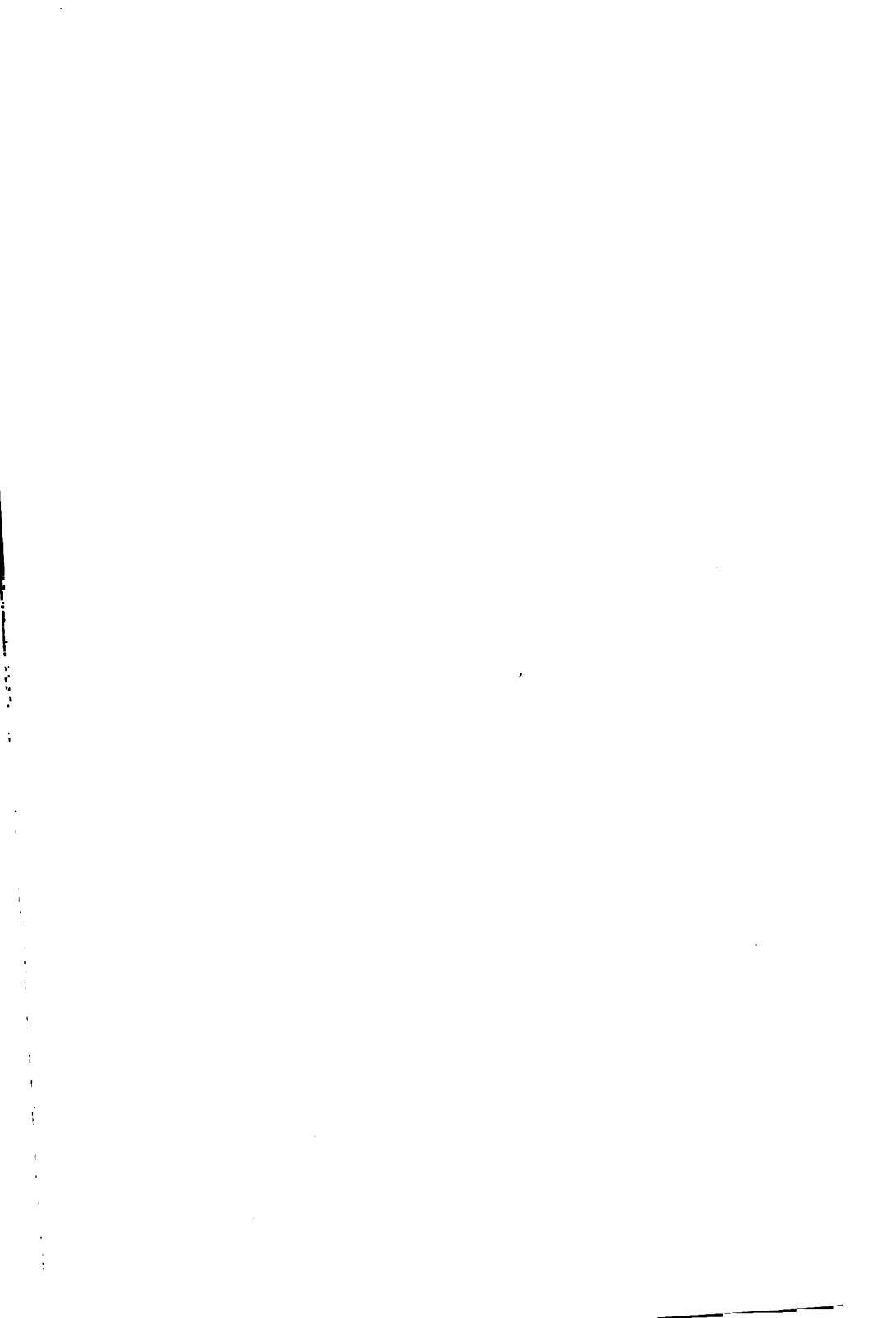
The plan of the church is oblong, a nave with north and south aisles, of four bays, slender stone columns, simple curved capitals, and pointed arches. The form, and probably the timbers of the old open roof remain, but the upper part of the walls and the arches have been whitewashed. It is said that underneath this whitewash are ancient decorations in colour. The only portion of these now apparent is on the pier at the left of the high altar (to the right of the visitor entering the church), where there is a fresco of S. Bernardino, with a partially decipherable inscription



OLIVE MILL, DOLCEDO







## Ventimiglia to Savona

showing the date *M. cccc. lxxxviii die mensis ma . . .* (? probably marzii) and stating “. . . *pinxit Gabriello Sella de Finario. . .*”

The church ends with three semicircular apses, of which the two smaller ones have been unfortunately blocked up by some modern abortions of altars, which should be removed. The whole character of the building corresponds exactly with that of the smaller church—of the Knights of Malta—to which reference has already been made as existing in Porto Maurizio.

A treasure of the church is to be found in the *pala*, or triptych, in the wall of the apse behind the high altar, which, though in a deplorable condition, is a splendid work of art, worthy of the most reverent care. It has been put together clumsily at some comparatively recent date, and the principal panel—a Madonna and Child—is evidently out of its original position, where it corresponded perfectly with the saints on either side. The Crucifixion—now below instead of above—is of exquisite workmanship and very well preserved.

To the right of the Madonna (left of the spectator) is S. John the Baptist. On the opposite side is S. Nicholas. It is difficult to make out the other figures owing to the impossibility of getting near enough, the accumulation of dust and cobwebs, etc., but it is safe to mention S. Bernard, S. Francis, S. Michael, and S. Catherine among them. The figures are on a gilt gesso ground, with raised ornaments, and by the Commendatore D'Andrade the work has been attributed to Brunengo.

## Riviera

From the terrace running round the church there is a fine view over the surrounding country.

In the village of Monte Grazie itself may be seen instances of the habit which prevailed somewhat extensively in these parts, long ago, of making *frantoj* or olive-crushing mills in the houses themselves ; so that the peasants could crush their own olives and produce their own oil without having recourse to a communal mill, or one shared with a number of other proprietors.

On returning from this drive it is easy to turn off soon after reaching the bottom of the slope and visit the village of Moltedo Superiore, where in the parish church is a good picture of S. Anna, attributed to Vandyck. The authorities in Rome are so convinced of its genuineness that it has been declared a *monumento nazionale*, which simply means, in other words, that its owners cannot sell it, or allow it to be taken out of the country. It is placed behind the altar at the end of the south aisle, and is usually covered up ; but the parish priest will always willingly show it to visitors if the sacristan is not to be found.

If the visitor is tired of mere antiquities and wishes to see a picturesque village he can drive or cycle to Dolcedo. There are two roads, one by Caramagna—the better road, but with a rather steep ascent. Along this road one gets a fine view of the interesting village of Torrazza, on the opposite side of the valley. The second road, not so good but more level, passes through Piani, and Clavi, the latter a “fraction,” *frazione*, of



ON THE SHORE, DIANO MARINA—CERVO IN THE  
DISTANCE



William Scott





## Ventimiglia to Savona

Torrazza, which remains high above on the left. The church a little way above Clavi is of the same style as the other early churches of the neighbourhood, and still has some interesting features. The slab with an inscription stating that the church was dedicated in A.D. 1001 is evidently of quite modern date, and worthless, but the building is undoubtedly ancient.

Oneglia, the rival of Porto, has not quite so much smartness and gaiety of appearance, but it is already prepared to cater for foreign visitors. Indeed it boasts (besides its proud title of "Civitas Fidelissima," bestowed for its loyal attachment to the House of Savoy) that visitors were in the habit of going to stay in it before San Remo was known. Anyhow it has already a really good and comfortable hotel, the "Grand," kept by Signor F. Calvi, a most enterprising and energetic individual, assisted by his courteous wife. English families will find here unusual comfort, well-furnished rooms, and really reasonable terms. Those who have tried the place are enthusiastic in its praise.

Oneglia takes great care in the education of its children, and the very extensive buildings dedicated to this purpose are exceptionally comprehensive. A pupil can pass through all the grades preliminary to the University without leaving the town.

Walks and drives in the neighbourhood are abundant, and sites for villas can be had at prices which compare very favourably with the extravagant pretensions of landowners at other places along the coast.



## Riviera

There is a pleasant excursion to be made up the valley of the Impero along the good road which leads to Ormea. A number of villages picturesquely situated will be found dotted along the route, and the visit can be extended at pleasure. For a day's trip it may be enough to take a carriage to Pontedassio, and though this place has little to recommend it beyond the *pala* behind the high altar in the church, and the well-known biscuits which are largely exported—they are simply a kind of rusk—if the visitor can obtain permission from the courteous and obliging Commendatore Musso to see his collection of old paintings, he will be well repaid for the journey.

The house is a fair specimen of an Italian gentleman's abode, and Commendatore Musso does the honours with delicate old-world courtesy. His pictures are lovingly cared for and in good preservation. They are not ranged in formal rows in a gallery, but form a part of the decoration of chambers in daily use, and are objects of care and devotion.

There is a very fine "S. Agatha" by Onorio Marinari, a pupil of Carlo Dolce, and "A Page" by the same. A couple of exquisite small seascapes are attributed to Cuyp. Two delicately-painted flower subjects are said to be by Mario dei Fiori. "The Rape of Proserpine" is by Domenichino, or one of his school, and there is a "Madonna and Child" which experts pronounce, with more or less reason, to be probably the work of Titian himself. However this may be, the visitor who has the good fortune to see the collection will wander

## Ventimiglia to Savona

through room after room in the company of a real lover of old Italian art.<sup>1</sup>

There is a walk of about an hour, or rather less, up a very fair path to Bestagno, on the opposite side of the stream. The village has little to recommend it except its simple picturesqueness, but there is on the left, near the top of the slope, a watch tower, evidently rebuilt on older foundations ; and some distance to the right of the village are the remains of the feudal castle of the old Counts of Bestagno. The interest is rather archæological than artistic. A cistern, one or two vaulted chambers with the usual small windows widely splayed on the inside, and a portion of the aqueduct which formerly brought water from the opposite hill are the most noticeable features. The owners say they frequently find such relics as old arrow-heads, and sometimes pieces of pottery, in working up the ground, which is cultivated right up to and inside the walls. Permission to visit the ruins must be obtained beforehand by inquiry in the village, to avoid inconvenience or annoyance, but it is usually granted in response to a courteous application.

In private houses here some very exquisite wine is to be tasted, but the visitor must not allow this tantalising statement to make him trust to the culinary capacities of the place, if he should find himself there about lunch time. Even in Pontedassio the wine to be obtained in the *osterie* is very poor.

<sup>1</sup> A polite note of inquiry should be sent to the Commendatore Musso some days beforehand, as the collection is not usually shown.—W. S.

## Riviera

The valley is thickly planted with olives, and, unfortunately, they are seriously affected by the ravages of that pernicious pest, the *Phlæotripide* insect, which, though slow in its deadly action, is yet sure in producing ruin. The only remedy as yet known is to cut down every bit of foliage, and indeed the greater part of the tree—*capitozzare* is the technical term—and burn it. Naturally, the peasants, conservative in their habits in spite of modern political propaganda, are reluctant to adopt such extreme measures; and will drift on year after year, seeing their favourite trees dwindle away and cease to be productive, until at last they will be compelled to consent when, perhaps, it may be too late. At Villatalla, on the western side of Porto Maurizio, the ravages of the *Phlæotripide* have for years been so destructive that the authorities have had to intervene and help by a contribution. Ten thousand trees have been cut right back, and are now showing splendid new vegetation without a sign of infection.

There are many other troubles, diseases, and pests to which the sad-looking olive is liable, such as, for instance, the *Cycloconium*; but most of them can be successfully combated by scientific means, among which the use of the well-known sulphate of copper holds an important place.

Lovers of the picturesque will learn with some regret that the method of pruning which has resulted in so many charming-looking trees is far from being one which tends either to the health or productiveness of the tree itself. This is another of the thousand and



**CERVO**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

one things that they "manage better in France"; and olive-growers will have to learn the lesson, if olive-culture is to continue being worth their while.

With almost precisely the same aspect as Bordighera, protected by surrounding hills, and with a fine view towards the east, Dianomarina is well suited to be a winter residence for foreigners. It suffered severely in the earthquake of 1887, and has been entirely rebuilt on modern lines. The whole of the town is on the flat, which makes it convenient for some classes of invalids, but there are plenty of hill walks in the neighbourhood.

Those who like quiet, and deplore—or profess to deplore—the development of, say, Bordighera, for instance, such as it is, should come here. At the same time there are facilities for bathing—a fine stretch of sand, the water is not deep near the shore, nor is the coast dangerous. For those who do not mind a little roughness there are, away from the first-rate bathing establishment, a number of "popular" cabins where a supply of costumes and other necessities, with perfect civility and attention, can be had for a few *soldi*. In the centre of the town is a public garden, opposite the sea, and music twice a week. During the summer season crowds of Italians come here for the bathing, especially from Lombardy and Piedmont.

On the principal promenade is a really excellent hotel, the "Paradis," with every comfort, with courtesy and moderate terms, and a delightful look-out towards the sea. In many respects Dianomarina shows us what Bordighera might and should have been. The railway

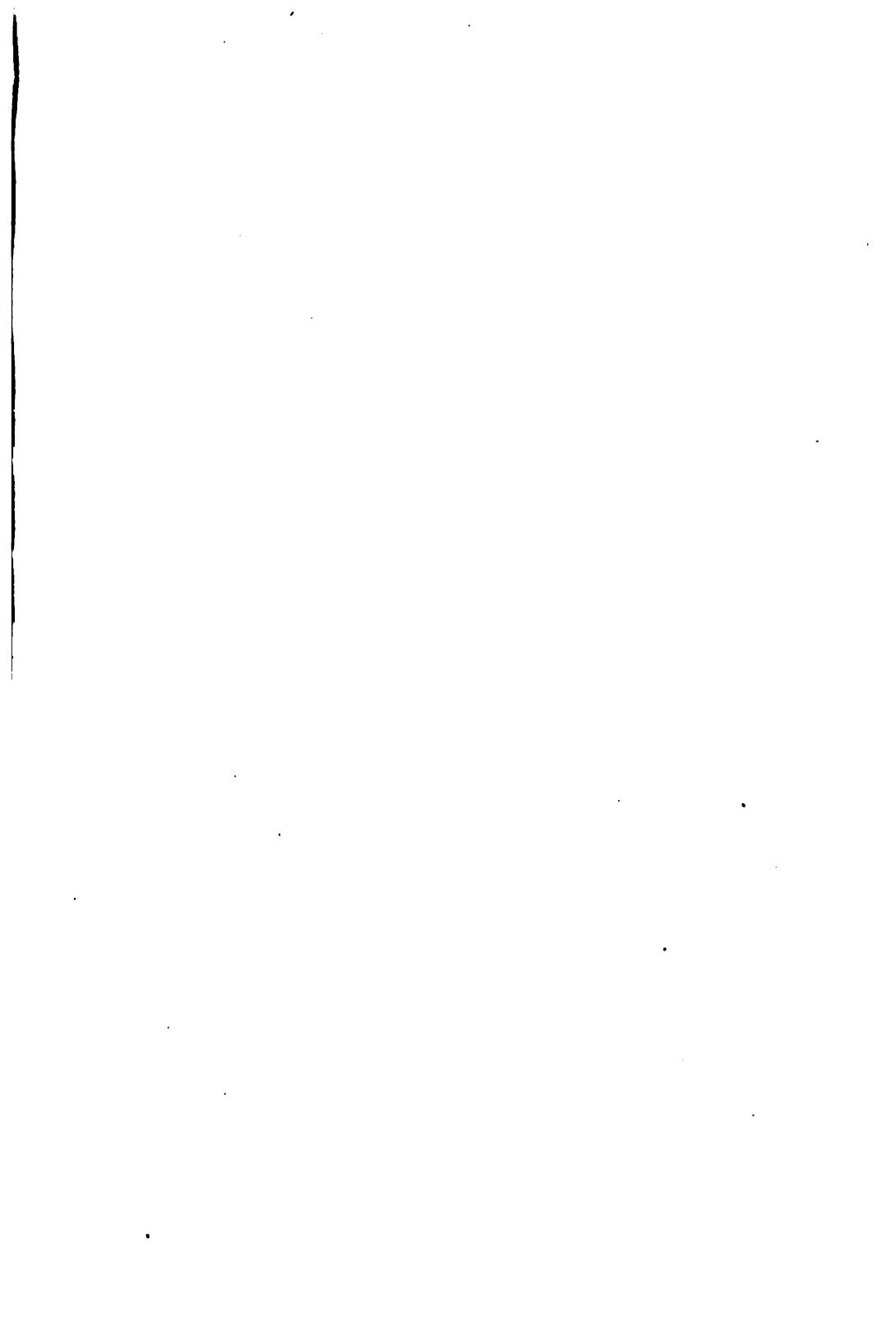


## Riviera

runs along the back, not the front, of the town, and though there are no gay shops or wild excitements, no theatre except of the most elementary character, and no blazing gambling-rooms ; there are quiet, restfulness, the charms of nature, a good climate, and courteous inhabitants. The history of the district is also interesting.

In former times the neighbouring town of Diano Castello, which may be seen from the train, picturesquely situated on a hill half an hour's walk away, was the seat of authority and the residence of the Marchesi di Clavesana, the lords of the district. These nobles were of Piedmont, and their authority rivalled that of Genoa. It is easy to trace in the dialect of the district the influence of the Piedmontese, for a very slight attention will serve for noticing at once the difference between the mode of speaking here and that of other parts of Liguria formerly under the sway of Genoa. The nobles of Clavesana preserved their feudal rights till a late date, and the last Marchese of the race was murdered by a jealous husband, through insisting on the hereditary *jus primae noctis* which had been the privilege of his class from mediæval times.

The town of Castello cannot be called picturesque in itself in spite of its position. It suffered severely, like its neighbour, in the earthquake of 1887, and many of the houses are still in ruins. There remains, though modernised, the palace of the Marchesi di Clavesana, with a fine carved lintol in what is called black marble, but is in reality *lavagna*, or a kind of slate. The



**LAIGUEGLIA, NEAR ALASSIO**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

subject is a "Baptism." The shields at the two ends have been defaced. Not far from this is another house, also with a carved lintol of similar character and fine workmanship representing the "Annunciation."

The chief treasure of the place is the old church of S. John the Baptist, now desecrated, but a *monumento nazionale*, and the property of the Commune. It dates from about the tenth century, and has been more or less restored, but it is still very interesting. On the roof are remains of good and delicate colour decoration dating from mediæval times. The most important portions—a series of panels between the rafters—are fortunately untouched; but many of the other details have been restored, in other words, repainted in parts. The whole merits careful study and illustration.

The small church of the "Assunta," of which a considerable portion, including the Campanile, is comparatively modern, has an ancient apse still remaining, and dates from perhaps a little later than its neighbour. It has precisely the same character as that already noted in connection with the old church at Porto Maurizio, etc.

On the outer wall of the Municipio is an old fresco representing the naval engagement of Meliora, in which the Genoese were victorious over the Pisans. On a scroll is the inscription: *Pisarum classis nostris victoria laeta Diani cuius causa fuere viri.*

Excellent oil is produced about here.

From the shore at Dianomarina one sees the

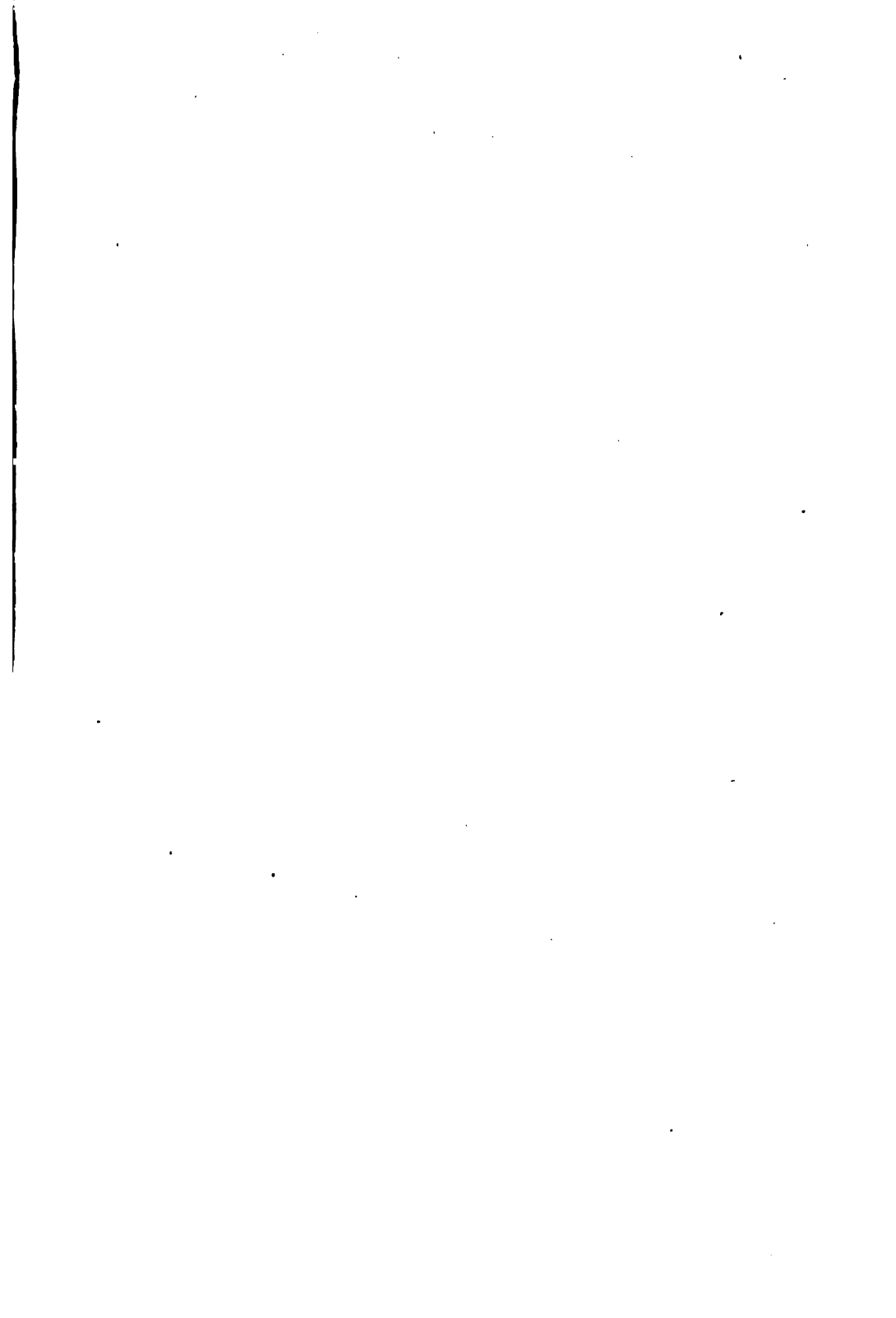
## Riviera

extremely picturesque village of Cervo climbing up its hillside, and with its church towers rising above the rest of the buildings. There is little of interest in the place itself, but it will serve for an excursion between meals. On no account should the unwary traveller trust to getting anything in the shape of food at either of the utterly inhospitable and worthless *osterie*. He will meet with more surliness and incivility in one half-hour at Cervo, at the hands of "mine host of the inn," than in a week's experience in the other places along the coast. If he wants drink—even too much—he can be supplied with it, such as it is ; but he must not presume to ask for anything to eat, at the risk of being unceremoniously shown the door.

Between Diano and Cervo, before reaching the old wooden bridge over the torrent-bed, usually dry, a road turns off to the left, and leads to S. Bartolomeo del Cervo, where the church has a good triptych of the fifteenth (?) century in excellent preservation. There is nothing else of interest in the place, but from certain points it is possible to get a good view of Cervo itself.

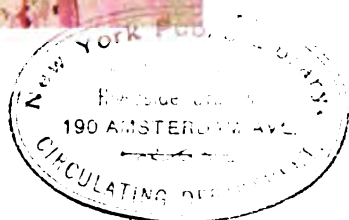
Beyond Cervo, again, is Andora. Now Andora is a fraud. In other words there is no such place, for Andora is in reality only the name given to a *mandamento* consisting of five different "fractions," villages or hamlets.

Some half an hour's walk from the railway station is an old bridge which is said to date from the Roman era. Some parts of it may do so, but it has evidently been added to at various times, and the larger arch is





ON THE SHORE, ALASSIO





## Ventimiglia to Savona

certainly of a very much more recent period. The whole is in good preservation, and forms a picturesque object in a rather good landscape, where the wild oleander grows freely.

Along here there passed the old Roman road—the *Via Aurelia*—and boats came up from the sea and were moored at the banks; as is proved by the existence of old mooring rings, which have been discovered in recent times.

From the bridge a rough path leads up to Andora Castello, where are the remains of an old castle formerly belonging to the Marchesi di Clavesana. Later it passed into the possession of the Marchesi del Carretto, whose descendants are to-day settled in Albenga; and afterwards it became the property of the Republic of Genoa.

In A.D. 1300 there were, according to the old records, not less than four hundred and fifty families included in the *borgata* or borough of this castle, and it is said that a large proportion of the original inhabitants of Diano Castello and of Laigueglia emigrated from this place. The situation is a very fine one, commanding splendid views of the valley, and being well protected against the worst winds.

The first noticeable feature is a fine tower, known as the Porta Aurelia, forming the entrance to the Castle precincts. Just beyond it is the old church of SS. Philip and James, in very fair preservation. This is a splendid specimen of early architecture which has escaped the destructive influences of the Renaissance with its usual

## Riviera

plaster shams. It has been judiciously repaired rather than restored, and will well repay a visit. It consists of a nave with aisles and apsidal terminations of the type usual in these parts. Some of the columns are octagonal, the remainder are round, and there is a marked absence of symmetry in certain parts of the design.

A curious and not too common feature, at all events a feature not frequently preserved, is the *trigolo* or tank for oil which is to be seen in the apse behind the altar. We have already seen and noted elsewhere how in all this district it was the custom for the inhabitants to contribute a certain proportion of their oil for the use of the church, and this oil was carefully stored in the building itself.

There are now not more than fifty inhabitants of this little "fraction"; but the priest, the Rev. Luigi Guardone, is an enthusiastic student of antiquity, and an intelligent and jealous custodian of his old church. He has struggled bravely against interested opposition in connection with its preservation, and has had the satisfaction of seeing its worth recognised at last by the proper authorities, and itself declared a *monumento nazionale*.

It is said that the name Andora may be a corruption of *Ad ora*, seeing that many of the ancient documents were inscribed *Castrum ad ora Fluminis Merulae*.

Those who wish to procure lunch in the neighbourhood must follow the main road on farther to S. Pietro del Molin Nuovo, or, more briefly, Molin Nuovo;

## Ventimiglia to Savona

where, at the Trattoria del Merula, they will find rough accommodation and simple food, but plenty of courtesy and attention. Opposite the station of Andora there is also a Trattoria where food and refreshments can be obtained.

Alassio is in many ways more fortunate than most of its rivals. It has already gained the sympathy and patronage of a large number of English residents. It has plenty of hotels, from the first-class and unequalled "Grand," where M. Masson and his charming wife are devoted to the welfare of their guests; down to the more modest little pensions, where, for a few francs a day, the invalid or the weary student may rest in comfort. Its climate is somewhat bracing during the winter, and temperate during the summer, while its opportunities for bathing are scarcely equalled along the whole coast. It is a suitable centre for excursions, by carriage, on mule-back, or on foot; and its acquaintance with the wants of foreign visitors has resulted in the regular supply of good food and other comforts too often wanting elsewhere.

Reference has already been made to the unwisdom of those who rush away from the Riviera in the spring just because it is the fashion to do so. It is precisely in connection with such a place as this that the observations could easily be shown to be well founded. If those who care for quiet enjoyment of Nature, opportunities for study or rest, and a perfect climate, would resolve to pass at all events a good part of the summer in Alassio they would be well repaid. Plenty of villas

## Riviera

are to be had, and in their picturesque gardens, along the smiling hillsides, it is possible to reach very near to an ideal out-of-door life. Flowers, rare plants, and palms grow in splendid profusion. Fruit is plentiful and cheap, and the bathing superb. There is no formal restraint or foolish conventionality, and the Italian bathing visitors, men, women, and children, belonging to some of the first families in the land, walk about the shore, the streets, and the hotels in their white *accappatoi* during the morning and late afternoon. In the evening there is generally some sort of slight amusement, concert or spectacle, in the little *Giardinetto* by the shore; but those who seek wild excitement or the opportunity to exhibit numberless and showy new costumes, will do well to stay away. Alassio is not for them, and does not desire their company.

As examples of what can be done, and is done, in gardening here, it is only necessary to mention the villa and grounds of the well-known American scholar and writer, Mr. Fiske, who passes his life in studious retirement, surrounded by a wealth of rare and lovely flowers and trees.

A worthy rival to the famous Mortola gardens of Sir Thomas Hanbury is to be found in the superb grounds of the Villa della Pergola, belonging to Sir Walter Hamilton Dalrymple, Bart., where a real love of nature, an intimate knowledge of gardening, and a perfect taste in arrangement, combined with judicious and generous expenditure, have produced one of the marvels of the Riviera. The climate of Alassio is such





**SANTA CROCE, NEAR ALASSIO**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

that not a few rare plants cultivated with difficulty even under the favourable conditions of La Mortola grow here in absolute freedom and luxuriance. From the shady terraces of the villa a magnificent view is obtained, comprising the whole of Alassio and the surrounding hills, with the blue sea in the distance. In the soft summer nights, with the moonbeams casting long shadows from the cypress and the palm, while the nightingale's notes break alone upon the stillness, and a gentle breeze blows the breath of the rose and the jasmine on its wings, the noise and tumult of the world "are left far away and forgotten," and mere existence seems enough.

With the increasingly favoured automobile it is easy to run along the Corniche road to the French frontier and Monte Carlo, if desired, on the one hand ; or to Savona and Genoa on the other. From either end Piedmont and the Lombard plain can be reached, and steamers leave Genoa at frequent intervals for home ; while yachting on the Mediterranean is a superb delight within sight of such a lovely shore.

A popular and easy walk from Alassio along an old and but moderately steep path said to be Roman (here nearly everything old is said to be Roman) leads to the ruins of Santa Croce. Here a lovely view is obtained, on the one side towards Albenga, on the other side back towards Alassio itself. All the amateurs paint at this point, and many professional artists as well. It is charming.

There are also walks to the picturesquely situated

## Riviera

villages of Moglio and Solva, and it is easy to drive to Andora and Cervo already mentioned. The favourite drive is to Albenga.

This is a clean and interesting town of ancient foundation, not yet provided with much accommodation for foreign visitors ; and in autumn a favourite haunt of the wily and insinuating mosquito. The inhabitants are courteous and obliging, though their general prosperity makes them decidedly independent. The deposits at the local Savings Bank are calculated literally by millions of *lire*.

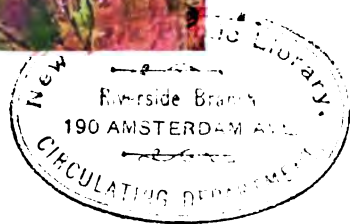
The town was once situated on the hillside towards the west ; and it is recorded that Constantius, brother-in-law of the Emperor Honorius, husband of Galla Placidia, rebuilt it in its present position, after it had been devastated by the barbarians in the fifth century. Its ancient name was *Album Ingaunium* or *Albingaunium*, and it was the headquarters of the *Ligures Ingaunii*.

In 1251 the free Commune of Albenga passed under the ruthless dominion of Genoa in the disaster which had overtaken its ally Savona.

A short distance beyond the town, on the road to Genoa, is a Roman bridge, a real one this time, but it is no longer washed by the waters of any torrent. On one side the peasants' gardens come right up to its massive masonry, and on the other is the public road. It has a desolate and forlorn appearance, while conserving still a good measure of its ancient and indestructible dignity. It is to be hoped that some day the authorities—who have already considered the



VIEW FROM SANTA CROCE, LOOKING TOWARDS ALBENGA  
—EARLY MORNING







## Ventimiglia to Savona

project—will see their way to deviating the road on the west side, and removing the constantly increasing accumulation of earth on the other, so as to allow this ancient and valuable relic to rest in a more suitable environment ; and at the same time to assist in its preservation. The chief difficulty lies in the lowness of the level at which it now stands, and the fact that if a space were excavated all round it, that space could not be properly drained, but would become a stagnant pool.

Here a word of warning to the unwary traveller may save some annoyance. Even in these days of new alliances and much-lauded *rapprochements* all round, the Italian military authorities are so awake to the possibilities of an invasion that they will not allow the gentle English "Mees," for whom some of them profess such admiration, to use her modest Kodak in the most innocent snap-shotting. Notices are posted about the neighbourhood to the effect that no photographic apparatus of any kind may be used in all that region. The regulation is, of course, unnecessarily and absurdly harsh, but it must be obeyed. The idea is simply to prevent the acquisition, by foreigners, of information about the roads leading towards certain important fortifications away up the valley. Of course no one but a trained military expert could possibly procure, still less communicate, any information of practical usefulness ; and the absurdity of the rule is seen in the fact that the inhibition, while annoying to ordinary and innocent visitors, is of course futile and

## Riviera

powerless to prevent the acquisition of information by competent persons who may really desire it for inimical purposes. But Italian red tape is just as unpractical as that of other countries ; perhaps even more so.

From the number of its towers—there must formerly have been thirty or forty belonging to different noble families—Albenga used to have the designation of *turrita*, and though most of these have disappeared or are incorporated more or less completely into buildings of a later date, there are sufficient remaining to justify the appellation.

The foundations of the Cathedral, dedicated to S. Michael, must have been laid at a very early date, for as far back as the sixth century the Baptistery—a class of building only allowed in the neighbourhood of a cathedral—was erected with the remains of older and possibly Roman structures. This Baptistery forms to-day the most interesting of all the architectural relics of the town ; but it has undergone many changes and vicissitudes at the hands of men and time. In recent years the restorer has been at work in the vain endeavour to bring back its “pristine splendour.”

In the Cathedral archives are many very fine illuminated manuscripts, missals, breviaries, psalters, and a superb Latin Bible, all in good preservation. They are tended with jealous care by the learned keeper of the archives, the Rev. Leone Raimondi, Canon of the Cathedral, who has devoted his life to the study of these old documents. Most of the work is of the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries. There are also some very

## Ventimiglia to Savona

early specimens of the printer's art, one having been printed at Rome in 1475. There is a fine copy of a work entitled *Le Leggende del Beato Giacomo da Varazzine*, printed at Venice in 1483 by Ottaviano Scotto; and the *De Bellis Civilibus* of Apiani Alessandri, printed at Reggio in 1495 by Peregrino Pasqua.

In one of the corridors leading to the *Archivio* is an ancient fresco of Christ on the Cross, with the two Mariés; and outside is a very curious old well-head, which deserves better care than it enjoys at present.

The Roman road from Alassio is continued with more or less interruption to Albenga, and portions of the old "brick-on-edge" paving are still in existence. Enthusiastic antiquarians will have it that the troops of Hannibal must have passed along this road, but as there is no proof of the circumstance, it may be accepted or rejected at will according to the credulity or incredulity of the visitor. There is, however, no doubt that along this narrow path there passed Napoleon I. with his troops at the time of his war with Austria; and his general, Masséna, was encamped in the neighbourhood.

Not far from this path, just before it reaches Albenga, and situated on a prominent headland, is the ancient monument commonly designated *il Pilone*, and popularly supposed, like so many other things, to date from Roman times. More probably it belongs only to the Middle Ages, and it may have served as a sort of lighthouse. It has suffered horribly at the hands of

## Riviera

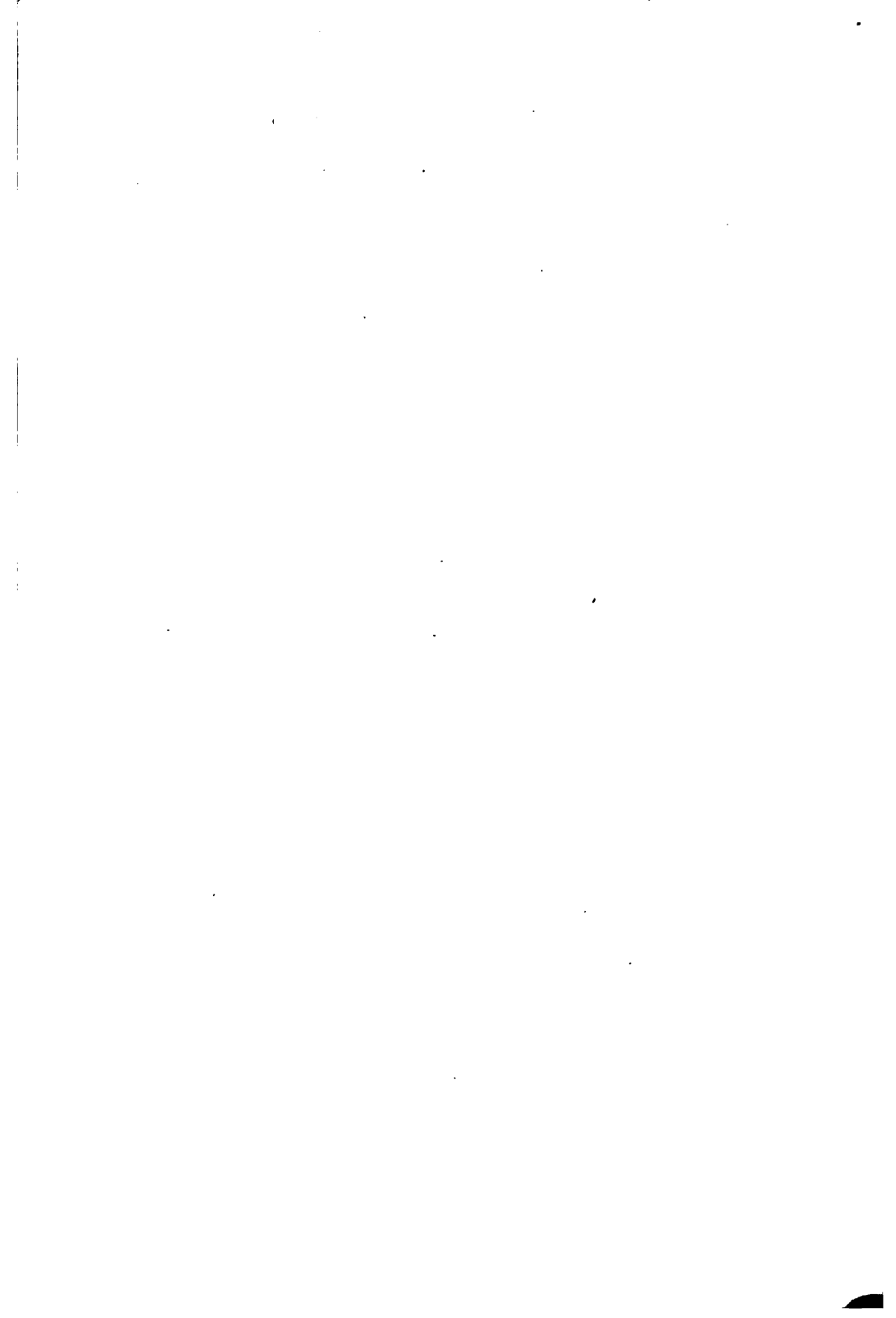
some most unwise restorers ; and all its original character has been lost in a foolish and useless attempt to bring back what has for ever departed.

Hard by are remains of an amphitheatre or arena, an ellipse of which the chords are roughly calculated to have been 60 and 70 metres respectively. Here was the old city of the Romans, running down to the *Porto Vadino*.

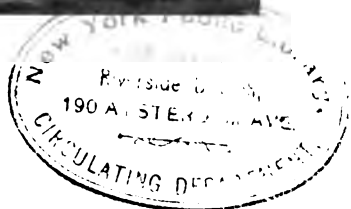
From Albenga a pleasant drive takes one through Lusignano, the refuge of Mme. de Genlis during the troubles of the French Revolution, to the picturesquely situated village of Villanuova, between the Lerone and Aroschia torrents. The more ancient Villanuova did not stand on the site of the present one, which dates from 1255, when its construction was authorised by a deliberation of the Communal Council of Albenga.<sup>1</sup> It has still its walls all round, with square towers at intervals. There is nothing of special interest in the place, but the visitor may notice the quaint well in the principal street, where two very heavy copper buckets are swung from a thick chain, and the women bale out the water with small ladles into their own receptacles, in turn, as the bucket at each end is up or down, a slow and troublesome process.

A short way beyond the village is a rather curious round church, not, however, dating farther back than the sixteenth century, and now only used for religious services once a year, on one of the festivals of the Madonna. A little farther on is the parish church, with

<sup>1</sup> See P. Accamé, *Statuti Antichi di Albenga*.



**STREET IN VILLANUOVA, NEAR ALBENGA**







## Ventimiglia to Savona

an old campanile and porch, but no other architectural interest, though the natives point with some pride to the date 1007 on the *pila* or holy water stoup by the entrance. It is too evident that this date is a mere fanciful addition of modern times, and in no way authentic, as the character of the work does not correspond, nor do the figures themselves.

Large quantities of fruit, especially peaches, are produced round Villanuova, and the peasants are mostly well-to-do. It is stated that as much as 100,000 *lire* (£4000) are taken for peaches alone during the season.

A quarter of an hour by carriage still farther up the valley is Galenda, with the Church of the Nativity, of itself possessing no value whatever, but containing a fine picture of the "Madonna and Child with Saints" by Domenichino. It is understood that large sums have been offered for this picture. There is another to the right of the high altar, attributed, but with little reason, to Raphael.

In the village they tell wild tales of the former great generosity of English visitors in the matter of tips to the sacristan; not without a certain regret that in recent times these same *inglesi* have become more *fürbi*, as the natives express it, and content themselves with more modest—and more sensible—contributions.

The road now continues up a tiresome slope of 6 kilometres to Casanuova, picturesquely situated, like so many other places of this district, but quite without any interest in itself.

Those who want to "kill time," or to enjoy an

## Riviera

opportunity for *solitude à deux*, may make the excursion to Pieve di Tecò,  $29\frac{1}{2}$  kilometres from Albenga, along a monotonous though well-made road. Cyclists in search of a run would find it agreeable, as the slope is extremely moderate and almost imperceptible; but the scenery is not specially good and the villages are at distant intervals. A fine day should be chosen, for if a cold wind is sweeping down the valley, as not unfrequently happens, there will be little pleasure in the trip.

Continuing along the coast to about 6 kilometres beyond Albenga, we come to Ceriale, another of the little towns which had a hard struggle with the pirates, Saracens, Turks, or French. Little remains of its most ancient buildings beside the campanile of the church, the foundations of the church itself, and an old tower now incorporated into a dwelling-house. The *Municipio*, Town Hall, has some of the records of the Confraternity of S. Caterina—Saint Catherine—and a copy of its statutes dating from the middle of the sixteenth century. Among these statutes are the prescriptions for the flagellation which the members were ordered to inflict upon themselves with knotted cords; but some comfort seems to have been also provided for them under their sufferings, for in several of the account books of the Confraternity we find notes of so many *amole di vino ad uso dei disciplinanti*, measures of wine for the use of the flagellants.

There was a custom of distributing loaves of a particular kind of bread, or *michette*, on certain fête days, and the accounts contain frequent notes of the

## Ventimiglia to Savona

corn, caraway seed, and saffron used in making them. We thus see that our own Devonshire is not alone in the habit of making "saffron cakes."

The church bell was very frequently in need of repairs or new ropes ; the special preacher was paid 4 *lire* for a sermon on great fête days, and the licence to say mass cost 1 *lira* 4 *soldi*.

There is one well-authenticated tradition with regard to a raid of the Saracens or Turks, when some forty women of the place were carried off by the pirates. The authorities afterwards found means, as usual, to ransom the poor prisoners, and most of them were able to return to their homes before becoming mothers. But it is recorded of one young woman that she was so content with her new lot, that she preferred to remain with her captor, and we may hope that they "lived happy ever after." The fruits of the raid were seen in due course, taking their place among the regular inhabitants of Ceriale, and gave rise to a curious local saying. Even in the present day when any one makes himself obnoxious or disagreeable, his companions will say to him by way of reproach : "Hold your tongue, for you are a Turk of Ceriale !"

Sometimes the raids were even more serious than this one. There is an instance on record when a youth of the place, having been refused the hand of a girl he was desirous of marrying, determined to be revenged on her father. He took ship for the south, engaged himself to a pirate leader, and directed an attack on his native place.

## Riviera

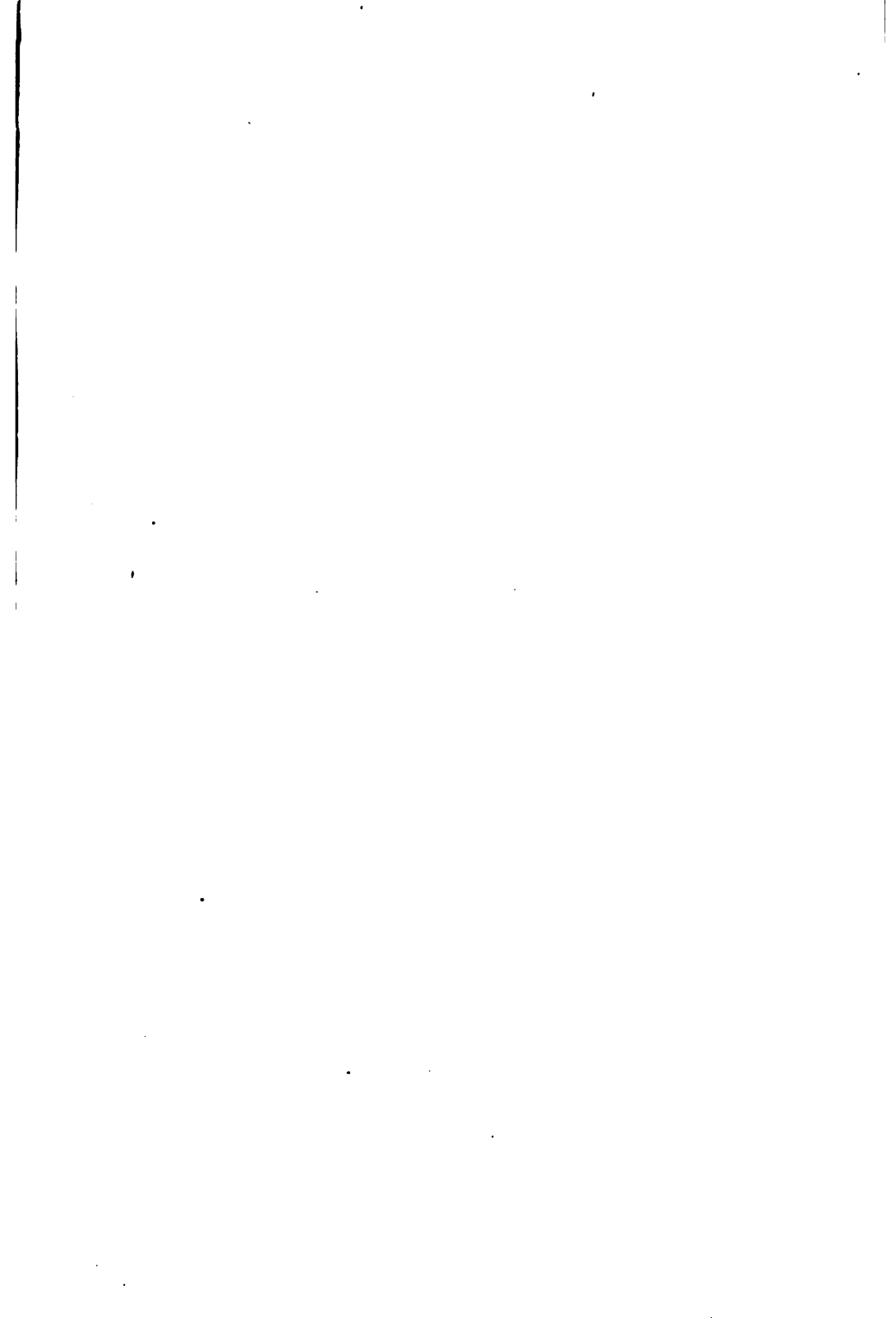
Such villainy was fortunately rare, but Maineri,<sup>1</sup> in his book on Ceriale, gives an account of one of the most important raids, when at least three hundred prisoners, men, women, and children, were carried off. Many of them were afterwards ransomed, and there exists a record of the sums paid for each family or individual. In general the price per person varied from 250 to 300 pieces of *otto reali*, each equal to 4 *lire* of Genoa, with a varying rate of exchange.<sup>2</sup> The undertaking to pay the ransom was made by the Municipality itself through its agents; and each individual so ransomed had to give a guarantee to the authorities for the repayment within twenty years of the sum expended for him, at the rate of 5 per cent per annum. The guarantee usually given was a piece of land.

Another of the pleasant little towns on the coast is Borghetto S. Spirito, but a passing glance will be sufficient.

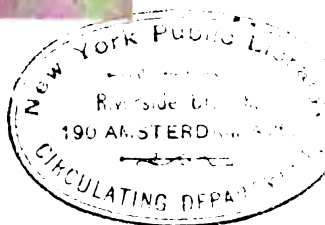
Those who have time may cycle or drive hence to Toirano, a picturesque village about half an hour's ride away. It is of ancient foundation, is situated on a torrent, and has a famous grotto, to which a pilgrimage takes place yearly in December. In this village a curious habit has come down from mediæval times. Instead of the *focaccia* or cake formerly given to the priest for a marriage fee in some other places along

<sup>1</sup> B. E. Maineri, *Le Conchiglie del Torsero, e i Turchi al Ceriale*, Roma, Civelli, 1890.

<sup>2</sup> In 1637 a piece of *otto reali* was worth 4 *lire* 1 *soldo*; in 1651 it had risen to 4 *lire* 12 *soldi*.



BASTION ON THE SHORE, CERIALE







## Ventimiglia to Savona

this coast<sup>1</sup> it was, and is still, customary to present him with a couple of silk handkerchiefs in return for his services.

The parish church has some good pictures, and among them (first altar on the right) a fine "Descent from the Cross." The tower is old, with delicate corbel tabling.

In the middle of the village of Toirano there is a charming little inn, the *Locanda degli Amici*, with a vine-hung terrace overlooking the torrent bed, and good simple food, accompanied by real Italian courtesy and attention of the best sort. The population is chiefly, if not entirely, occupied with agricultural pursuits, and there is so little taste for display or fine costumes that the local tailor is also the barber.

From Toirano a very steep and badly kept road leads in one hour to Balestrino, where, in a magnificent position, is a castle of the Marchesi del Carretto. In the lower and outer portion the old walls and bastions remain, but the inhabited part is a plain rectangular block of comparatively modern date, without any architectural character or interest.

Pietra Ligure is possessed by a modernising spirit which has no respect for its ancient history or its monuments and records. There are fragments of old work here and there which deserve conservation, but the principle is not understood. It will suffice to notice the absurd fashion in which the ancient bridge, a short distance up the torrent, has been treated by

<sup>1</sup> Cf. *Rock Villages of the Riviera*, p. 82.

## Riviera

its present possessors—its soffits plastered without rhyme or reason—to convince one's self of the advantages of "leaving well alone." The foundations, at least, of the bridge are in all probability of Roman construction, but the superstructure has undergone rebuilding in later times, though it is still old enough to merit care, and deserved to escape the mistaken attentions of unwise restorers.

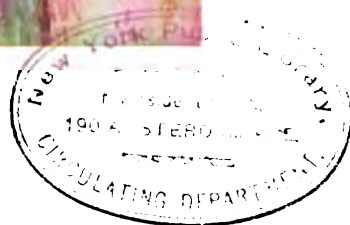
In the town itself are portions of a brick-built house of the sixteenth century, probably doomed to destruction ere long. In the Piazza is a church of very early foundation, which has just undergone—and not for the first time—the usual beautifying (?) process, and is, in consequence, quite unrecognisable. It is due to the skilled insistence of a local archæologist and accomplished writer on historical matters, the Commendatore Paolo Accamé, that the fragmentary remains of a once superb fresco in the interior of the principal façade have been preserved from destruction. There is now absolutely nothing else of value in the building.

One picturesque feature of the streets should not escape the visitor's notice, viz. the large number of vines growing outside the houses, and carried right up to their terraces on the top. Many of these vines must be of very considerable age.

Finalmarina is simply a modern and fairly pleasant offshoot of the old Final Borgo, situated some quarter of an hour's drive up the valley. The "possible" accommodation is limited to one hotel, the "Garibaldi," in the principal street, but there are several bathing



**ENTRANCE TO TOIRANO**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

establishments, and in the summer a fair number of Italians from Piedmont and Lombardy find their way here, and take lodgings, of a sort, in private houses. The beach is good and agreeable.

Borgo retains traces of its former importance and considerable portions of its old walls. It is still the seat of justice for the district, the most important courts being held here, and at almost every turn one finds an old arcade, a carved lintol or capital, or a piece of careful masonry, taking us back in thought to the Middle Ages. At the entrance to the town is a picturesque old tower bearing indications of its many vicissitudes.

There is a melancholy air of departed greatness about the place, unatoned for by any evidence of renewed or returning life and vigour ; but it merits our respect as something which has "seen better days." The church, of course of the usual *baroque* type, has a marble pulpit of most elaborate and clever workmanship, but of quite other than excellent design or good taste.

Above the town is the old fort, now a prison ; to reach it take the path to the left when opposite the  *Pretura* . It is fairly paved and not difficult. Past the fort the path continues to the crest of the hill, and leads in about twenty minutes to the ruins of Castello Gavone, another of the many castles of the Marchesi del Carretto, and better worth visiting than some of them.

On looking back there are fine views across the



## Riviera

fort and the town to the sea in the far distance and the hills on either hand. The ruins are considerable in extent, and of various dates, the plan as well as the masonry of the chief tower being curious. The position, as usual, is superb. To visit the ruins pass along the narrow path (which ceases to be paved where it becomes practically level, and follows the eastern side of the hill) as far as the little hamlet of Perti; where the church, with its quaint turret and fine cypresses, make a pretty group. Then turn sharp to the left, and just above the path one comes to a tiny *osteria*, rough, but with very civil people. Here one can get simple refreshment, eggs, cheese, bread, and good light white wine, with abundant fruit during the season. The owners of this *osteria* are the custodians—*manenti*—of the castle, and cultivate the grounds right up to and inside the walls. Of them permission must be obtained before visiting the ruins, and one of the family will serve as a guide.

Afterwards one may proceed onwards beyond the church, about five minutes, to a curious little chapel on the right, dedicated to N. D. de Loreto, and called from its design the Chapel of the Five Campanili.

This is a pleasant and easy trip well worth making, but the best general view of Castello Gavone is to be obtained from the road on the opposite side of the valley. Pass through Final Borgo towards the west, cross the bridge, and turn to the right up the *Via di Gorra*. After a short walk—all up hill but not difficult—Castle Gavone appears on the right.

## Ventimiglia to Savona

To the east of Finalmarina along the Genoa road is Finalpia, a very small place, practically a mere suburb of the larger one, only noticeable for its old bridge and the campanile of the adjacent church attached to the monastery of the Olivetani.

The road along the coast here becomes wilder, and some of the rocks are fine. Between this and Noli the district contains many caves where indications of prehistoric man have been found in abundance.

At Noli one's pleasurable sensations at the sight of the extremely interesting old church of S. Paragorio, close to the railway station, are mixed with regret at the mistaken zeal which here, as in so many other cases, has overstepped the limits of a reasonable and judicious preservation; and practically destroyed an ancient monument of incalculable value, in the eternally futile attempt to bring it back to its original condition.

Rarely can one point to a more interesting specimen of an ancient church which until our own day had practically escaped the destroyer's hand, or deserved more conservative treatment, to the absolute exclusion of any mere imitation of the antique.

The foundations of the building must date back at least as far as the eleventh century, and it consists of a narrow nave of three bays, with aisles, having apsidal terminations. The piers are all different in plan, the arches semicircular. The choir is raised six steps above the nave, and underneath it is a crypt, with altar, etc., reached from the nave itself.

The character of all the architectural details is very

## Riviera

simple. Preserved in a glass case at the west end—a most unusual and welcome example of conservation—are the interesting remains of the old wooden throne for the bishop: a seat with traces of its coloured decoration. A bald and glaring modern copy, according to the gospel of S. Restorer, has been set up in the choir, and we are thankful no worse has happened. The fragments of the original *ambone* or pulpit have fared worse. They have been incorporated into a (clever but undesirable) modern imitation of what the restorer imagined the old one to have been. The altar slab is evidently original. Fragments of the old roof are also judiciously preserved. In the aisle, near the entrance, are slight remains of a fresco with the date 1470. There is also a *predella* of comparatively late date, but, fortunately, still unrestored.

Outside the church are some ancient tombs or stone coffins, and a couple of arched canopies for wall tombs. One has a marble slab with the inscription :—

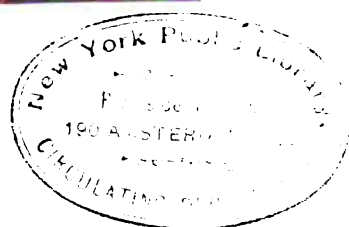
+ · M · CC · LXXII<sup>o</sup> · DIE · XX  
 AUQUETT · SEPOLCRU  
 DNI · GANDULFI · DEGASCO  
 ET · EIUS · HEREDUM.

The character of the caps and bases to the columns of this tomb corresponds perfectly with the date given above.

The exterior of the church is broken up by small pilasters, only about nine inches wide, at frequent



**FINALMARINA**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

intervals, and above it is the usual arched corbel-tabling, but of the very simplest character, and a bevelled cornice or eaves-course.

The porch is partly modern, but the portal is excellent and interesting.

The town of Noli itself is fuller of interest than most of its neighbours. There are considerable remains of its old walls, and numerous towers, which give it a certain resemblance to Albenga. On the hill at the opposite or eastern end are remnants of the castle, climbing the hillside picturesquely, and reminding one of Marostica in the Veneto. The best general view of them is probably the distant one to be obtained from the beach of the neighbouring Spotorno. The promenade along the sea-front is fine. There is a summer bathing season, with a cheerful crowd of Italian visitors, and one excellent little restaurant, the "*Italia*," with good white wine.

Past Spotorno the road leads to Bergeggi, or rather to the tiny railway station of that name, for the village—a collection of scattered hamlets—lies far above on the hillside, only to be reached after a toilsome climb. This begins about a mile before the station is reached, with no indication of dwellings to guide the traveller until he has gone some little way.

The houses are even more rustic than usual, and have the advantage of a more liberal use of colour in varying and random shades of red and yellow. It can hardly be advanced as a demonstration of the principle *Ars celare artem*, but certainly the result is more



## Riviera

satisfying to artistic taste than many more ambitious attempts to decorate cottage homes in modern times. The only object of any interest belonging to the past is an old tower, duly sketched, the owner of which—the bystanders were careful to inform one—was at that moment lying dead within its walls. He was a Crimean veteran, and had begun his last sleep the previous evening at the age of eighty-four. R.I.P.

It is possible, though hardly advisable for any except the daringly adventurous, to find a *scorciatojo* or short cut down to the railway station. A personal acquaintance of ours was once tempted to try it, and his experience should be a warning. On inquiring the way, he was told—he says—to “follow that young woman”; not by any means an unpleasant direction, as she was very good-looking. Having obtained her permission, he found the shady path under the olives very pleasant, and, while it remained fairly horizontal, far too short; but it was evidently approaching no nearer to the level of the sea and the necessary railway station which represented his destination.

At last the mystery was explained, for the charming guide turned sharply down a rustic stairway, not to be called a path, cut in the very face of the rock, which gave our friend—the words are his own—the sensation of walking on the edge of the Bottomless Pit.

Certainly no one but a born mountaineer—which he was not—could hope to negotiate such a path with proper dignity and ease. His English blood made turning back out of the question, and he followed his



**CHURCH OF PERTI, NEAR CASTELLO GAVONE**





## Ventimiglia to Savona

guide into the abyss, as it seemed to him, though he has confessed that once or twice when she was not looking he did clutch at a friendly tuft of herbage or stiff grass, to keep himself from going headlong. For the credit of his race it may be recorded that he reached level ground only a few yards behind his companion ; but his hair was prematurely grey, and only a Northern *sang froid* prevented him from displaying his emotion.

When he gracefully thanked "that young woman" for her company, he thought she seemed disappointed that the shock had not been more severe. Evidently it was not the first time his pretty siren had led a mere man on that truly downward path. Male visitors beware !

Between Bergeggi and Vado is an old fort dating from the time of the domination of the Republic of Genoa, but no longer used for military purposes. Indeed it is said that it formerly served as a Lazaretto. Its modern ownership has long been bitterly disputed between the two neighbouring communes, with the ultimate triumph of the latter.

At Vado itself, with a historic past stretching back well into, if not beyond, the times of Roman struggles and occupation, and noticed in the records of classic authors, there is nothing at present to detain us. The modern church, of the usual type of plaster architecture, is worth noting for its unusual plan, and the fine effect produced by its proportions ; also the treatment of the nave and choir in one width and height.

Hard by is a lighthouse, and extensive works are in

## Riviera

progress for the formation of a breakwater which is to improve the port of Vado, and afford facilities for a vast extension of its business relations. It is already—constructionally, at least—united with its neighbour and rival Savona, while maintaining its independent administration.



*Sainte-Agnès.*



*Le Cannet.*

## CHAPTER VII

### SAVONA TO SPEZIA

THERE seems no doubt that Savona is less ancient than its neighbour Vado, but its earliest remaining records chiefly refer to its repeated destruction and rebuildings, beginning with an invasion by the Vandals in A.D. 411. As far back as the ninth century, the Moors and Saracens are found at their work of devastation in Liguria generally, and Savona did not escape. Some writers insist on seeing evidences of their occupation in the still existing *Torre del Brandale* and the *Porta Balnei*.

Without staying to do more than note that during the earlier centuries of the Christian era the government was in the hands of the Bishops as representing Imperial authority, and that these also bore the title of Count,<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> This may have been accounted for, in part at least, by the fact that many of the *paesi* and *castelli* belonged in very ancient times to the Holy See, being included in the patrimony of the *Alpi Cozie* ceded to it by the Longobard kings Ariberto II. and Luitprand. By a deed in date 17th December 1385, for instance, Pope Urban VI. gave over several places, including Pietra Ligure, Giustenice, and Toirano, to the authority of Genoa. See P. Accamé, *Statuti Antichi di Albenga*.



## Riviera

we find that in A.D. 490 Savona formed part of one of the three "marche" then created by Berengarius II., and its holder or chief was a certain Count Alerame, descendant of Count Guglielmo of Provence.<sup>1</sup> This particular investiture is interesting to us now, for from this same Alerame descended the Marchesi del Carretto of whom mention has so often to be made. In connection with Savona, the first one of that name of whom we find a record was Enrico del Carretto (1125-1184), who was surnamed *il Guercio*; while from another branch of his family arose the Marchesi di Clavesana and Albenga.

The struggles of the people for their independence were finally successful in 1191, when Ottone, Marchese di Savona, by a formal document and agreement, sold or yielded up to the "Consuls" or representatives of the inhabitants all his rights and authority for the sum of 1500 *lire* of Genoa.

The rights thus acquired were jealously preserved, and some statutes of the Commune date back as far as 1345, being repeated and confirmed by those of 1404.

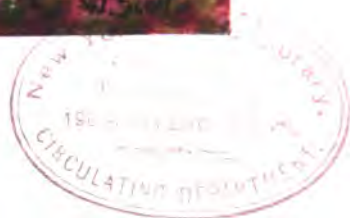
Genoa soon began to be jealous of its rival's power and success, and never scrupled to oppress her in every possible way. It is said that already in 1153 a convention between the two communes was signed, by which the "Consuls" of Savona engaged to submit themselves in certain matters to those of Genoa, but doubts have been thrown upon the authenticity of the statement.

The struggles continued without intermission, made

<sup>1</sup> Bruno, *Storia di Savona*.



**TOWER AT BERGEGGI**





## Savona to Spezia

bitterer by the fact that Savona espoused the cause of the Ghibellines, while Genoa was devoted to the Guelphs, but in 1227 Genoa obtained a decisive victory over her rival, pulled down her walls, and carried off hostages. Useless were the reprisals and fresh attempts at independence, for they only provoked more serious measures of repression. In 1251 peace was made on the basis of a convention, ruinous indeed for the weaker combatant, but necessary to avoid utter destruction. It was only in part relaxed by a later concession in favour of her shipping, granted in 1277.

For assistance in her struggles, and the possible protection of her interests, Savona invoked the alliance, or at least the friendship, of independent nobles or neighbouring rulers.

Genoa retorted by continually stirring up strife, fomenting discord, and by provoking the inhabitants of another small but important neighbour, Noli, to interfere.

Nor did the trouble cease when, in 1339, Genoa elected as her Doge Simon Boccanegra, himself a native of Savona. The nobles persistently sought to strengthen their own position and assume authority in exchange for the show of protection afforded; and thus a new series of burdens was cast upon the suffering commune.

In 1345 the populace rose in rebellion, and drove the nobles from their offices and from the city. Pope Clement VI. interposed his good offices for the restoration of peace, but with little effect; and it would seem as if, in despair, the Savonesi then followed the example

## Riviera

of Genoa, and allied themselves with the Visconti, lords of Milan. But the influence of Genoa was destined to be paramount, and a couple of years later we find Savona—still obeying her rival—fighting against her former allies. Soon the collapse was complete, and peace was only obtained by a promise of absolute obedience, exacted under the threat of a ruinous fine of fifty thousand golden florins.<sup>1</sup> The fleet of Savona fought with that of Genoa against the Venetians at the famous battle of Chioggia, and earned the thanks of the “pre-dominating partner” for its bravery.

New plots and perhaps treacheries followed, until at last, in 1394, the Commune found itself under the necessity, or at least the advisability, of yielding itself up to the Duke of Orleans, by means of a convention tending to guarantee many of its most important liberties.<sup>2</sup>

Always restless and malcontent, Savona passed, together with Genoa, under the domination of Charles VI. of France in 1396, but in 1410 reacquired its freedom. In 1458 it was compelled to follow Genoa in a new subjection to France. When in 1496 Louis XI. succeeded Charles VII. he ceded both the rival cities to the Duke Sforza of Milan, but three years later Savona again found herself subject to the French king.

The first quarter of the sixteenth century was disastrous for Savona. Fresh struggles, new reverses

<sup>1</sup> Bruno, *op. cit.*

<sup>2</sup> E. Jarry, *La vie politique de Louis de France, duc d'Orléans*, quoted at some length by Bruno, *op. cit.*

## Savona to Spezia

ended in a new and fierce attack by Genoa ; and, after a period of brave resistance, a convention was signed by which Savona came definitely under the domination of her rival, saving only the honour of her arms and a promise to respect the walls and houses. Needless to say, seeing the character of the Genoese, this promise was not respected for an hour, when once the city had been given up.

From this period onwards it is unnecessary to trace separately the story of Savona. It occupied a subordinate position and shared the fortunes of its neighbours. But there was a moment when, in the struggle with Napoleon, an English army took an important part, and when, after being allowed to leave the Savonese fortress with all the honours of war, the French troops marched towards their own country. Then in 1814 the Commander-in-Chief, General W. C. Bentinck, from his headquarters at Genoa, issued a proclamation reinstating the previous provisional government of the Genoese States ; and this lasted until the final incorporation of Liguria into the Sardinian kingdom.

Some of the guide-books amiably tell us that Savona is a good resting-place. This may be a question of taste, and to many persons the city is not sympathetic. In fine weather and on festas, with the gay crowds, the military uniforms, the martial music,—it is a garrison town,—the broad streets and lofty arcades, the bright shops and air of general well-to-do, Savona is passable, at least, if not more. But under less favourable



## Riviera

conditions strong inducements would be required to lead the casual visitor to make a lengthened stay. There is a theatre, and there are some rather second-rate caf  s, a public promenade extending to the sea, and a bathing establishment, where during the season entertainments are given. The port certainly may have interest for some beside business men ; but even it has less picturesqueness than one might expect, with its little forest of masts and spars, where almost the only noticeable feature is the quaint and graceful felucca rig of some of the Mediterranean boats.

Doubtless Savona's chief attraction lies in its past, and this does not appeal universally. There are remains of its departed greatness to be found occasionally in the old streets ; curious doorways with carved lintol and jambs, with the sacred monogram or a Latin motto between the family escutcheons, a scene from Bible history, or the oft-repeated exploits of S. Michael or S. George.

The ancient cathedral was destroyed in the middle of the sixteenth century, and the present one was founded in 1589. From the older building certain treasures were removed and adapted. Among these are the inlaid choir stalls, the work of *Anselmo de Fornarys* in 1500, as we learn from an existing inscription. Over the side door, and on the interior, is the carved spandrel in black marble—representing the Assumption—from the earlier edifice ; and it is said<sup>1</sup> that the very fine crucifix in marble by the principal entrance was

<sup>1</sup> Bruno, *op. cit.* p. 29.



GENOA, FROM THE CORSO MAGENTA





## Savona to Spezia

formerly on the apex of the gable in the chief façade of the same building. This is a notable piece of work : on one side the figure of Christ, on the other that of the Madonna and Child, all surrounded with graceful ornament, the emblems of the Evangelists, and other features.

On the opposite side of the same door is an ancient font, surrounded by its parapets of pierced and sculptured marble, the latter dating from the early *cinque-cento*, while the font itself is considerably older and bears the shields of the famous Marchesi del Carretto. It is, however, possible that these may have been executed later.

In the chapel at the end of the aisle is the old coffin, and, it is said, the body, of a Bishop of Savona who died in 1228.

Among the great names which have shone out in the history of Savona, the greatest, without doubt, and the most famous, is that of Christopher Columbus. Many are the towns which have laid claim to the title of having been his birthplace, but it seems fairly decided at last, or at all events agreed upon by those whose special researches have entitled their opinions to respect, that this honour must be reserved for Savona. Cogoleto will show us a house where he first saw the light ; Genoa is proud of having been the *patria* of the great explorer, and has erected a fine monument to his memory ; but the final argument is thus expressed by Bruno in the work already several times referred to :—

## Riviera

But in the midst of the discussions which arose everywhere, especially in the year of the solemn commemoration of the fourth centenary of the discovery of America, light came from the archives of the military orders of Madrid, through the discovery made by the illustrious professor, D. Francesco R. De Uhagon, of the sworn statements which Diego Mendes, the faithful companion and intimate confidant of Columbus, together with Pietro di Arana and Rodrigo Barreda, sailors on the two expeditions and eye-witnesses,<sup>1</sup> in the year 1535 ; that is a few years after his (Columbus') death, made before the tribunal of the Order of St. Jago, when Diego Colombo, a nephew of Columbus, applied to be admitted into the said order ; from which statements it results that the great navigator *hera natural de la Saona, ques una villa cerca de Genova*, and this also appears absolutely from the list of the knights who have worn the habit of Santiago, with their corresponding genealogies, which in eight large volumes are preserved in the secret archives of Madrid.<sup>2</sup>

Continuing one's journey along the coast, the next place reached is Albisola Marina, where pottery is largely made. Casual visitors may wonder what purpose is served by the curious sort of plinth or rough brick walling, extending about six feet up many of the houses, and carried out in alternately projecting courses of thin brick. A careful examination will show that masses of clay are stuck or spread on them to be "aired" before being moulded.

If the visitor is fortunate enough to happen on a big festa, he should try to see the religious procession.

<sup>1</sup> Literally "ear-witnesses."

<sup>2</sup> *La patria de Colon según los documentos de los ordenes militares* par D. Francesco R. De Uhagon. Madrid, 1892.





**A CORNER IN GENOA**





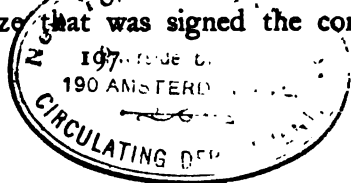
## Savona to Spezia

Not that it is in itself more remarkable than others of the same kind, but that the enormous crucifixes then carried are very magnificent and unusual. The crosses are richly and elaborately decorated in silver work, with large floreated designs at the ends of the arms, and are so heavy that a man can only support their weight for a few minutes at a time. Thus constant changes of bearers are necessary, and on the morning of the festa they may be seen practising their "steps" in the Oratory adjoining the church.

Albisola Superiore, probably by far the older town of the two, lies some distance up the valley, but need not occupy those who have little time to spare. Beyond this again, a distance of some six or seven kilometres, and along a road none too good, is the village of Ellera; rather picturesque, but not otherwise interesting, unless for the fact that in its neighbourhood is a cavern known as the *grotta delle streghe*, or witches' cave, where remains of prehistoric man have been found. There is a quite decent though rough little Osteria in Ellera, belonging to the local butcher; and his wife will always provide you with eggs or a cutlet and some good white wine.

At Varazze, farther along the coast, there are the rather picturesque ruins of an old castle, overgrown with ivy—in these parts an uncommon feature—but nothing else of interest. The little town is pleasant, clean, and cheerful, with the usual complement of bathers and bathing establishments in the summer.

It was at Varazze that was signed the convention



## Riviera

between Genoa and Albenga in 1251, when the latter town and its district passed under the dominion of *La Superba*.

Unless you are a good walker, do not let the natives inveigle you into trying to visit Cogoleto from Varazze on foot. They are fond of telling you that you can do it in "twenty minutes, or at most half an hour, by taking it easily," but as the distance is about nine good kilometres, and a great part of the road is a steep climb, you may be led into disappointment. It is curious how the local people, especially the peasants, seem quite incapable of judging time or distance, and their weakness is known to their neighbours. Having asked a peasant how long it would take to reach a certain village on foot, he said, "About an hour." But a townsman who was present courteously intervened and said, "Remember, signore, that one hour to a peasant means three hours to an artist." And he was not far wrong.

Drive to Cogoleto, if you will, and then the road is enjoyable, for it climbs high up among the pines, with their balsamic odours always floating on the air, and with lovely peeps of the blue Mediterranean between their red-brown stems; while Genoa, *La Superba*, lies in the hazy distance.

If you cling conservatively to old traditions in spite of their frailty, go and see in Cogoleto the house where Columbus is said to have been born, and where certain "relics" are jealously preserved. Royalty has been there before you, and you are sure to be reminded



CHIESA DELL' OREGINA, GENOA







## Savona to Spezia

of the fact ; indeed it is "graven in stone," or rather in marble, on the front of the house itself. Perhaps it will be wise not to tell the people you do not believe their tradition ; they might respect you less, for they are tenacious of their supposed privilege, and who shall say there are no grounds for their belief ?

From a modern point of view Genoa may be said to improve on acquaintance, and it is worth while to make its acquaintance if one has plenty of time. But in many respects it is undoubtedly overrated. Its position is magnificent, its commercial importance immense, its wealth very considerable, and its ambition unbounded. At the same time there is wanting that special charm which almost all other Italian cities have in abundance, and which endears them to us in spite of their faults.

About the people themselves there is a certain brusqueness of manner—not unconnected, doubtless, with the *superbia*, pride, belonging naturally to *La Superba*, as Genoa is always called—and there is everywhere an almost provoking air of well-to-do self-assertiveness. There are comparatively few poor to be seen, unless one penetrates into certain of the worst quarters of the city ; but Genoa's wealth has chiefly been made by speculation, as opposed to mere industry or work. She has been one of the world's great bankers, perhaps at one time its greatest, certainly one of the most unscrupulous ; and she seems to have learnt the happy secret of so treating money as to make it grow and multiply of itself.

## Riviera

The palaces of her nobles are full from plinth to cornice of that pride which Ruskin has told us is characteristic of the Renaissance architecture ; but it is a boastful pride, not justified by merit or worth. They are big in actual size, but only as the mechanical enlargement of small ideas ; a mere question of scale, not of design. A whole street of them, courts and gardens, gaudy frescoes and marble stairways, is not worth one of those tiny palaces on the Grand Canal in Venice where the choice marble plaques gleam like jewels in the sunshine, and the cornices and string-courses are wrought with scrolls of leaf and flower by the cunning of an artist's patient fingers while he breathed his very life and soul into his work.

What Genoa could do when she was less puffed up with her pride, perhaps less greedy for her gains, and more penetrated by a reverence for something out of and beyond herself, we may see in the façade of the little church of S. Matteo ; and in the dainty coupled columns and carved capitals of its cloisters, so pure in their delicate grace, so modest in their beauty. But behind that façade, in the interior of the church itself, the wild licence of the Renaissance has run riot, suppressing ruthlessly all that the piety of an earlier and a purer age had conceived.

It is symptomatic, indeed, that the name of nearly every worker—carver, sculptor, architect, painter—in the later period has been carefully handed down to posterity ; while the master minds of the Middle Ages, the matchless artists of those earlier years, have usually

## Savona to Spezia

left no traces of their names ; only the enduring realisations of their genius, the material embodiment of themselves in their works. To them it was enough to have wrought, to have created, to have spent their lives in art's service. Those who succeeded them have the applause of the crowd, the approval of the mob, and, "verily, they have their reward" ; but who shall say that in the Libro d'Oro of Art's immortal few the modest masters of that earlier time may not be inscribed for ever in characters our dull eyes are as yet unable to decipher.

It is pleasant to find some of the present-day work possessing excellent qualities. For instance, the church of the Annunziata, though belonging to the category of classic or rather Renaissance buildings, is one of the most successful of its kind. It is free from most of the tawdry extravagances with which such structures are usually disfigured ; its proportions are good and its details carefully considered. At the same time some of the essential faults inherent in the style are not wanting. The marble columns are practically shams, for, while pretending to be solid, they are merely faced with marble in thin layers. In the matter of colour decoration the superiority is as marked as in the constructive forms and proportions, while the great size gives an air of fine nobility to the whole. The use of gilding, too, is good ; indeed quite unusually so.

The fine new church in the Via Assarrotti is a specimen of modern architecture which has many good points in spite of the fatal mistake of trusting to mere

## Riviera

reproduction of classic or Renaissance features, instead of frankly clothing the required form of the building with an artistic garb which shall be the expression of the artist's own individuality, a part of the individuality of his time.

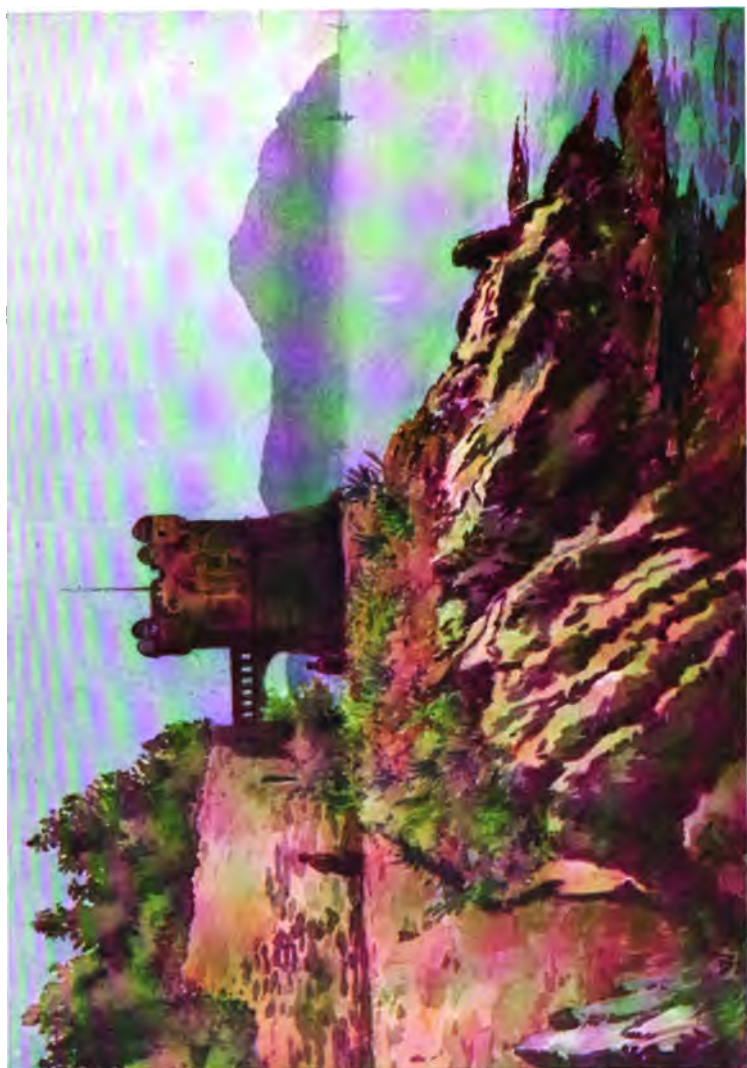
The peculiar situation of Genoa, on steep hills surrounding a bay, gives rise to an almost inevitable picturesqueness and a never-ending series of "views." The buildings are not worthy of their positions, or the result would be one of the most magnificent imaginable. There are not infrequent gardens and cleverly planted slopes, which add immensely to the effect.

Genoa is a convenient central point on the Italian Riviera, at a junction of several of the most important lines of communication, both as regards sea and land, but not in itself desirable as a winter residence. It has its own interests, such as its history, its commerce, its great opportunities for study, its natural features and beauties. Visitors who wish to "do" it in the truest sense should choose the spring or autumn.

Few examples of the force and at the same time the foolishness of some of fashion's dictates are more marked and astonishing than that which has prescribed the necessity for every visitor to Genoa to go and see the cemetery at any cost. The ancient churches, the historic palaces, the busy life, movement, and excitement, the port full of the world's shipping, and all the picturesqueness and fascination which go to make up a great city are as nothing before this maudlin and unhealthy custom which has grown into an inveterate and ineradicable



**THE PROMENADE, NERVI**





1911

## Savona to Spezia

habit. We have known American visitors arriving the previous evening from the States on their first visit to Europe, and leaving again by the midday train for Milan, decide, as there was nothing else of so much importance in the entire place, to devote the whole of their one morning to a visit to the cemetery! The proper associations of a burial-place are surely sadness and sweetness, peace and rest; but Staglieno is a vast assemblage of marble commonplaces or worse, with only here and there a more serious work of art to break the monotony. There is the rushing, chattering crowd of thoughtless sightseers gone to look at—what? Not the reverent memorials of their own dear departed, but the tawdry, vulgar, ostentatious show of all that mere wealth can do to outshine its rivals even over the solemn sacredness of the grave. Right well has it been described by a competent judge as one of the saddest, most disgusting sights ever beheld.

Will no one have the courage to break through this pestilent fashion, and dare to admit that he has visited Genoa, but refused to visit Staglieno?

Genoa is well furnished with educational advantages in its famous University, the worthy rival of those at Pisa, Bologna, and Padua; and the studious visitor will find abundant facilities for research in the fine *Biblioteca Civica*, or Civic Library, in the Piazza de Ferrari, as well as in the wonderful collection of old documents, filling more than seventy rooms, in the great palace now known as the *Archivio di Stato*, in a back street near the Prefecture.

## Riviera

Everything is kept in perfect order, and may be made available to those who are properly introduced, in other words, who can get sufficient influence ; but independent research is strangely discouraged. The authorities are fond of insisting that the work has already been done by others, and always advise one to turn to books already published on the subject one is interested in. They do not seem able to grasp the idea that not every student is content to obtain a mere formal statement of dry facts at second hand, a statement once made and done with for ever, but that each investigator may have—indeed should have—his own individual point of view, can receive and transmit to others independent and individual impressions, often placing historical incidents in a totally new light, because the very peculiarities of the old documents have had for him a special significance of their own.

No doubt a certain jealousy enters into the matter, and so much careful research has been undertaken by the authorities and officials of the Archives, and its results made known, that one is usually glad to take advantage of others' labours so far as they facilitate one's own ; but it is not satisfactory or helpful to be continually met with the objection that one's own special object has been already obtained by another person in another way, as if there were no more to be said or done.

The recently established institution which, with the authorisation—indeed, the participation—of the Government, has taken charge of all business matters connected with the port of Genoa, and has its headquarters on the



**ROCKS ON THE SHORE, NERVI**





## Savona to Spezia

old *Palazzo di San Giorgio* (still undergoing restoration), has served, among other things, to call attention to this old building, which has played an important part in the history of the Republic, though during the past century it had been neglected or misused.

It was for centuries the home of the famous *Banca di San Giorgio*, the precursor of those great trading companies or communities of which our own East India Company was so prominent an example. The marvellous power it obtained and persistently wielded, its perfect organisation, its influence on the destinies of the State, the absolute independence of external control, and the quite exceptional purity of its administration, make it one of the most interesting and useful objects of study. It has been designated by one of the earlier writers on the subject<sup>1</sup> as, in the first instance, an "organised public debt," or a great national bank. It arose out of the financial difficulties in which the Genoese State found itself in the early years of the fifteenth century, when all the available taxation had been pledged as security for loans, and nothing remained to meet current expenses. A commission was appointed, the holders of securities were called together, and a new association was formed, in which many of these became shareholders, while those who wished it had their claims paid off at once. The shares were fixed at a nominal value of 100 *lire* each, with interest at a maximum of 7 per cent.

<sup>1</sup> Carlo Cuneo, *Memorie sopra l'antico Debito Pubblico, Mutui, Compere e Banca di S. Giorgio in Genova*, 1842.

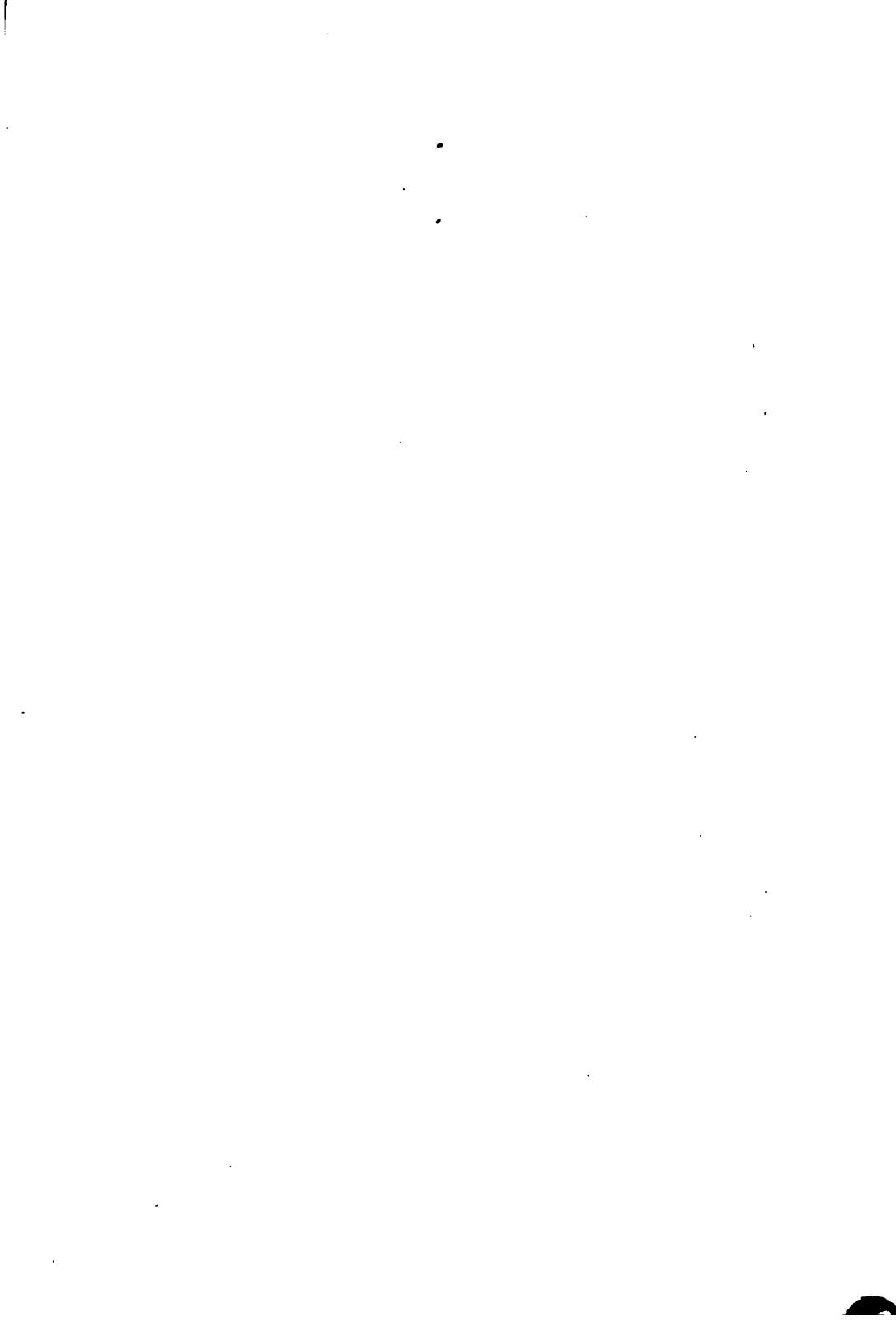


## Riviera

For this new institution a certain number of the "gabelle" or taxes were pledged, and the whole placed on a sound business basis, with a reserve fund as an essential feature ; the most solemn undertakings being entered into that this should not be interfered with.

The title of this new institution was at first simply the *Compere di San Giorgio*, the whole business transaction being placed under the protection of that patron saint. The shareholders were known as *Comperisti*, and they had numerous privileges, which grew in importance as time went on.

While from its earliest days the society was absolutely independent of the State Government, its affairs were always managed in such a way as to benefit the State, and not merely its own members. For instance, it adopted the special principle of not fixing a definite rate of interest on its shares, but varied this according to the amount of income accruing from the annual operations, and in times of difficulty or stress not allowing any interest at all, while out of all available income a certain proportion was regularly devoted to the sinking fund. In this way its influence and authority rapidly increased, as did the privileges of its members. According to the custom of those times, any citizen could be compelled to hold public office if he were selected for the purpose by the vote of his fellows ; and in the earliest period of the Company's history its members took their share in the local government, as individuals, independently of their relations with the *Banca di S. Giorgio*. As time went



**CAPO LUNGO, NERVI**





## Savona to Spezia

on, it became advisable, or so it was thought, to decide that the officers of the Company should not be engaged in the political administration in any way; but, as it would have seemed derogatory to declare them incompetent to hold office, they were instead (in 1528) formally "dispensed from the obligation" of holding office, even if elected by their fellow-citizens.

They were at first designated "Protectors," and afterwards "Procurators," while the president was known as the "Prior."

It was not until 1675 that the administration of the *Compere* took the name of Bank, though its operations had, of course, been of a banking nature; but at this date its functions were considerably enlarged, and, in consequence, the new title granted.

Among the important operations carried on by the *Compere* was the taking over from the State of many of its conquered properties, when these had a commercial importance; managing them from a business point of view, and afterwards ceding them again to the Government. In this way the institution became possessor of—among other places—Ventimiglia, Sarzana, Levanto, Pieve di Teco, and the island of Corsica.

To the *Banca di San Giorgio* is attributed by some writers the first introduction of banknotes—*carta di banco*—and so soundly was its credit established that the old writers boast of the fact that business men preferred its paper to current coin. In this respect its priority can hardly be maintained.

In consequence of important political changes the

## Riviera

*Banca di San Giorgio* ceased to exist as a separate and independent corporation in 1797, and was converted into the Public Debt of the State.

So rigorously did the administrators of the *Banca di San Giorgio* exclude all attempts at corruption that their treasurer was strictly forbidden to accept any sort of reward, present, or commission beyond his salary, with one curious exception, the *denaro da noce*, "nut money," which it was customary to give at Christmas—what we call a Christmas box.

The building itself dates from soon after the middle of the thirteenth century, when Guglielmo Boccanegra was elected captain or governor of the city. He seems to have been a masterful and tyrannical individual, and one who so far disgusted his fellow-citizens that in a few years' time he was summarily driven from power. In the meanwhile he had ordered the building of the palace for himself as head of the State ; and its architect is said to have been a monk named Oliveri, from the monastery of S. Andrew in Sestri Ponente, who had already been employed in other public works. Some authorities place the completion of the building in the year 1260, others in 1262. It is further recorded that in 1278 the son of the then King of Sicily was lodged there. At a still later date the palace is mentioned with the name of the *Palazzo del Comune al Mare*, the communal palace by the sea. It was enlarged in 1368; and again in 1392, before being taken over by the *Compere di San Giorgio* in 1407, as we have already seen ; without, however, ceasing to belong to the State,

## Savona to Spezia

which only ceded it absolutely to the Administration in 1451, when its name was changed to that by which we now know it.

It was afterwards enlarged, this time by the society itself, in 1535, and again in 1571, so greatly did the importance of the business operations increase, necessitating fresh accommodation. At this latter date the large hall was added.

From the Piazza de Ferrari in Genoa an electric tram runs in about an hour to the delightful suburb of Nervi. The Genoese are very fond of taking a trip there to pass the day ; but the place has apparently been besieged and taken possession of by Germans, for they are found in large numbers everywhere. Their special hotels and pensions are numerous, and they have recently built in the grounds of the Eden Hotel one of the prettiest and most effective little churches to be found on the whole Riviera. The town consists mainly of one very long street running, roughly speaking, parallel with the seashore, and joining itself with its neighbour Bogliasco. Indeed it is no exaggeration to say that there is practically no interruption in the line of buildings right away from Genoa, passing through the various districts of Sturla, Quarto, and Quinto to Bogliasco. The little town is shut in by high hills, and therefore thoroughly protected from nearly all the cold winds.

There is an absolute luxuriance of vegetation, pines and palms vying with smaller trees, such as oranges and lemons, and various beautiful shrubs, to say nothing of



## Riviera

the ubiquitous olive, and the common but graceful fig-tree.

One of the most marked features of Nervi is due to the intelligent care with which the local authorities have understood their opportunities and catered for the wants and welfare of visitors. The promenade along the sea is a model of its kind : not wide, but carefully and thoroughly executed, passing over the picturesque rocks and embracing a series of charming views. A good band plays there regularly, and there are *caffés* and refreshment places for those who cannot take a walk of even a few hundred yards without getting thirsty. Altogether, Nervi is an example which many other places would do well to follow. One is free from the temptations of gaudy shops, but the near neighbourhood of Genoa makes this of no importance. There is accommodation for persons of even very moderate means. The excellent little Italian restaurant, "Cristoforo Colombo," at the terminus of the tram-line, can be recommended to those who are content with good plain food, pure wine—especially the white—and courtesy on the part of the proprietors.

In the neighbourhood is Sori, good enough as the goal of a day's excursion, but offering no possibilities for a stay.

Quite a short distance farther along the coast, about six miles or less, we come to a district which has been "discovered" by foreigners, and here they congregate. Recco itself is of small interest, and most visitors continue their railway journey past it and the next



ON THE SHORE, SORI





## Savona to Spezia

station, Camogli, to Santa Margherita or Rapallo. But Recco must not be ignored, for it forms the most convenient starting-point for a delightful walk or drive up a steep carriage road to Ruta. The most suitable course is to settle at either Rapallo or Santa Margherita, where there are plenty of comfortable hotels, and then make the short return journey to Recco.

People get enthusiastic about Rapallo, and it bids fair to enjoy a splendid future. It has none of the *p'tit Paris*, or the "would-if-I-could" air of some other places, but is keeping its quaint simplicity in the older portion, and—as frankly—building a new quarter for the accommodation of strangers. One could have wished that the character of these modern buildings had been more artistic and less flagrantly meretricious; but, as the proverb tells us, there is no accounting for taste, even the worst, and there are many who prefer the showy bad to the modest good. Fine names have been lavished on Rapallo, and among others it has been called "the gem of the Eastern Riviera."

The position is on the shore of a lovely bay surrounded by hills, and therefore sheltered. Here again is a special and very marked luxuriance of vegetation, fine trees, and shrubs, among which the ilex holds an important place. This wealth of vegetation is especially noticeable all along the shore. In the gardens of the numerous villas it has been taken advantage of without any of the oppressive formality which so often spoils attempts at landscape gardening in the hands of those who trust to mere "taste," instead of sound and logical

## Riviera

principles, which are only to be mastered by proper study. One would rather say that here a good instinct seems to have been a guide in the sense of taking advantage of natural features, and the results are fortunate. Perhaps something is also due to the fact of a conservative spirit having prevailed and purposely hindered the wholesale destruction of picturesque trees. There are, besides, many fine specimens of the tall, quaint cypress, that prince of decorative trees, which some folks, who merely repeat parrot-like what they have heard other folks say before them, are fond of calling funereal ; but fortunately it seems to be anew coming into favour, to the great advantage of our landscape prospects.

Roses, of course, grow in great abundance, but there is a smaller proportion of what we know as "flower gardens" than might have been expected from the favourableness of the climate. Perhaps it is due to the fact that the flowers grow so easily and readily of themselves that there is so little need for formal cultivation, and the charms of Nature's wild recklessness are entrancing.

The climate has been described, analysed, and particularised by the doctors, till their descriptions read like abstruse medical treatises, incomprehensible to the uninitiated ; but, in plain language, the outcome of it all amounts to this, that most people, not too far gone for anything but the hope of just prolonging and soothing their last hours, will find themselves suited more or less well at Rapallo. The merely delicate and





**RAPALLO**





## Savona to Spezia

the fairly strong need not hesitate for a moment, unless their own medical advisers have any special objections. The air must be described as in general rather less dry, and therefore somewhat less exciting, than in some other places along the coast, and to many nervous patients this is an advantage ; but Rapallo can by no means be spoken of as a mere resort of invalids. The walks and excursions are numerous and delightful especially for those—and they are many—whose chief notion of pleasure is to climb to the top of “some-where,” and look down on the other side. The one question they always ask you is, “Have you been *up to so and so?*”

Still, in the neighbourhood of Rapallo there are so many chances of beautiful views from high points, with the lovely coast-line gleaming in the sunshine or sleeping in a soft faint haze, while the blue sea lazily laps the shore, that we cannot wonder at the enthusiasm with which some people get affected after a few successful experiments.

Among the most favourite trips uphill, indeed the one that “everybody” is supposed to undertake, is that to the Sanctuary of the Madonna di Monte Allegro. If the church founders of long ago often deserved blame for the want of good taste or architectural skill displayed on too many of their buildings, they usually showed an intense appreciation of natural beauty in the choice of situations for the same ; and the church of Monte Allegro is no exception to the rule. There is an ancient picture of the Madonna,

## Riviera

with, of course, a tradition attached to it ; and, still more curious, indeed quite unusual, a real natural spring in the rock at the side of the altar, from which, by the favour of the sacristan, and in the hope of a fee, the visitor is allowed to drink. Near the church is an inn, with a restaurant quite deserving of patronage after the steady climb of two hours ; but the path is nowhere really steep or difficult, and the ever-changing views over land and sea help to lessen the sense of fatigue even to pedestrians of only moderate powers.

It is advisable to complete the excursion by going on a short distance farther to the top of Monte Rosa, whence, on a clear day, the curious in such matters can descry between thirty and forty *campanili*, surely a large allowance of church privileges for a small district thinly populated.

The adjoining commune of Santa Margherita also lays itself out for the reception of visitors, and, for its size, has quite a number of large hotels. It, too, is quiet and unpretentious, but clean, well kept, and well situated. It is so near to Rapallo as to seem a part of it, though it is proud of its independence and rights. Thoroughly sheltered by the hills behind it, it enjoys about the same sort of climate as its neighbour, and receives the same class of cosmopolitan visitors. Some of the favourite excursions may well be undertaken from this place, and it is on the way to the "never-to-be-too-much-praised" Portofino.

It is difficult to furnish an efficient description of the natural beauties and attractions of this district without



**OLD TOWER, RAPALLO**







## Savona to Spezia

seeming to indulge in exaggeration. The general consensus of opinion may be taken to indicate that at least these beauties are far above the average. Count von Moltke is said to have declared that the walk from S. Margherita to Portofino was the finest in Europe. Even if the great soldier's sense of beauty in nature be discounted or called in question, and if comparison with a dozen other finest walks be avoided, there still remains the fact that few indeed of the more intelligent visitors who pass along it remain indifferent to its quite unusual charms. Many become enthusiastic, and are glad to go over the ground again and again.

The road winds along the shore the whole way, with an ever-varying series of lovely views. Big dark rocks are on one side, dipping into or rising out of the blue and glittering sea ; pine-clad slopes are on the other side, with here and there a cottage or a villa peeping out of their tempting shade. There is as yet no offensive note of modernity to mar the beauty of nature ; only the fairly kept road with its suggestion of at least a not too remote civilisation, and occasionally the quaint ramshackle little omnibus, seeming a bit of the Middle Ages left for our convenience if we be too tired to walk the whole way.

A delightful trip is that already hinted at, and bringing us to Portofino by another way. Taking a morning train from Rapallo or Santa Margherita through the tunnels to Recco, after a cursory glance round the well-situated but not very attractive little place, we get into the cheap omnibus for Ruta. If none be available,

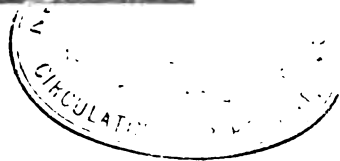
## Riviera

by some judicious bargaining a carriage may be obtained for, say, a franc and a half for two persons (though double this will be asked), and it is well worth the few extra *sous*. Those who are fond of views will find them fresh and varying at every turn. By degrees the whole of the coast-line to Genoa unfolds itself; and, far beyond, the hills lie bathed in a soft blue haze. Below us, as we rise higher and higher, are the outlying houses of Camogli, itself set quaintly on the shores of its own bay, where the little boats look so dainty, with their white sails all alike, that they seem like fairy toys in the sunshine on the rippling water. Behind Camogli rises the dark promontory which separates us from S. Fruttuoso and Portofino, and we reach Ruta in time for lunch. This over,<sup>1</sup> we turn up to the left, past the church (without going through the tunnel, which is on the main road to Rapallo), and the path rises gradually but steadily, its beauty increasing at every step, till we are practically on a ridge with views on each side. To the right are the bays of Camogli and Recco, the coast-line to Genoa, and the faint forms of the hills beyond. To the left there stretches the undulating series of mountains towards Spezia, with its numerous little towns and picturesque villages perched on hill-tops, nestling round tiny bays, or smiling on the slopes. Here and there we discern a castle, a watch-tower, or a church. The dark rocks, often of marble, plunge straight down into the blue water, and the road has had to leave the shore.

<sup>1</sup> There is a good restaurant at the Hotel d' Italia.



**CHURCH OF S. MASSIMO, NEAR RAPALLO**





## Savona to Spezia

From Rapallo to Zoagli is seen to be but a morning's charming walk, and Chiàvari is not very far beyond. Away farther is Sestri Levante, on its promontory ; and we know that Levante lies behind it. In the distance the exquisite picture is melting sea and sky and land into one pale blue mysterious haze, as on the other side.

Then we begin the descent, nowhere dangerous or difficult, though perhaps sometimes rather slippery where the red-brown pine-needles lie thickly on the stones ; but the air is exhilarating, balmy with the odours of the pine-woods all about us, and—in the spring-time at least—the banks are mottled and patched with wild-flowers. There is no need for a guide, for, as the natives say, “the path accompanies you.” At the *pietre strette*, a picturesque group of boulders among the trees, we see on our right the path which leads down to S. Fruttuoso, with its memories of the Dorias and its old watch-tower ; but we must keep straight on our own way, as the sun is dropping towards the west, and we need to reach Portofino ere the last humble 'bus has left.

Reference has already been made to the tendency everywhere observed to break new ground and get away from the beaten track. There are several influences at work to encourage this tendency. There is the desire of the *blasé habitué* for a new excitement. He is tired of the old haunts, wants to be “off somewhere else.” Novelty alone appeals to him, and familiarity breeds, if not contempt, at least impatience.



## Riviera

His only capacity for appreciating anything is limited to a temporary sensation, and when that is over only a fresh excitant can produce a new one. So he must ever be moving on.

There are those who want to be always in the van, among the select, cannot bear the vicinity of the crowd, prefer their own "splendid isolation." To them even the beauties of Nature are vulgarised by the contact of the mob. To go where "everybody" goes is to them an abomination.

Others again have a taste for the primitive, the unconventional. Some of them are moved by a desire for cheapness, others by a kind of morbid asceticism which sees wickedness in the joy of laughing crowds, and the trail of the serpent over all that savours of earthly pleasure.

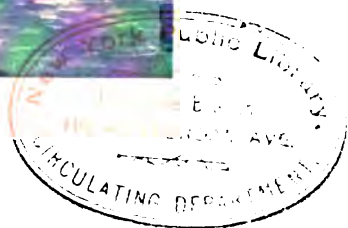
A few are really interested in research for its own sake, in unfamiliar records of the past, in the folklore of unsophisticated peasants, in primitive habits and customs which disappear before the glare of notoriety.

Whatever be the moving cause, we have to reckon with the fact, and it explains how fresh places are continually coming into notice, and whole districts are being opened up to visitors.

Along the Italian Riviera there is no lack of ground to be broken up in this way. On the shores of those tiny bays which indent the rocky coast, the traveller can get away from the world for a time, and lose himself, or be hidden from his usual associates. He can have all the advantages of the splendid Riviera climate



THE "CAVETTO DI S. MICHELE," NEAR RAPALLO





## Savona to Spezia

during the winter months without being surrounded by frivolities, or pestered by bores.

Even those in search of health will find themselves admirably suited, if their tastes are simple and their pretensions moderate. A medical authority—Dr. W. T. Beeby—writing on this subject has said : “Lastly, it is suggested that the rather primitive character of the Levantine Riviera is in itself a recommendation ; because the health-seeker should avoid too much social excitement, too much frequented and overcrowded resorts, and too luxurious a table.”

Very few of those who pass along the Eastern Riviera and see the name Levanto at one of the stations have ever ventured to explore the place. They would, however, be well repaid for doing so. Here they can enjoy Nature as yet undisturbed by much of man’s meddling, and yet be accommodated with perfect comfort and excellent food. Levanto is old, very old, but it has not forgotten how to entertain its guests, even those who bring with them the desire for modern refinement in the midst of simplicity. All the best trains stop at Levanto, and the courteous proprietor of the Grand Hotel is devoted to the welfare of his guests. It seems as if, at present, none but just a few English have ever ventured to explore the place during the winter months ; and for English tastes the arrangements are specially suited.

Nature is here rather sterner, more primitive. There is less of the palm-grove and the rose garland ; but the olive-clad slopes of the hillsides lead to villages

## Riviera

as quaint and curious as any others we have seen, and the possibilities of excursions are practically limited only by the pedestrian's power of endurance.

We have already had occasion to mention that Levanto was ceded to the *Banca di San Giorgio* in the fifteenth century, and it had long been a fief of the celebrated Da Passano family. The church of S. Andrea dates back at least as far as the thirteenth century, though it has been sadly despoiled in that disastrous period of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries when a mistaken zeal for Renaissance clouded the appreciation of pure early work. The pointed arches were then partly filled up so as to show semi-circular, the carved capitals were destroyed, and sham "Corinthian" abortions in brick and plaster substituted; the graceful stone columns were cased in plaster, and the whole interior changed into the fashionable "classic" character in vogue at that time. Fortunately the present parish priest, Don Pietro Benvenuto, who has held the office for over forty years, is a priest with a real love for early work, and for the beauty of his old church. He began to hack away some of the plaster and lay bare the early character of the building. Of course the ire of his leading parishioners was roused, and they objected to having their "nice white church destroyed." However, he persevered, and now tells with pardonable pride how on one occasion he ordered the builder to lock the doors and let no one know what was going on until some of the most objectionable features in plaster, hiding the older work in stone,





THE "CASTELLO BROWN," PORTOFINO





## Savona to Spezia

had disappeared, himself assuming all responsibility for the consequences. The true principles which should guide "preservation" work as opposed to pretended restoration were not then as well understood as they are now,—unfortunately it is but rarely that they are acted on,—and some inevitable errors crept into his work, such as the unadvisable copying or imitation of old features in a futile attempt to "bring back the past."

The example of energy and perseverance set by this genial old priest, with a quite youthful enthusiasm in spite of his seventy-six years, deserves to find followers ; especially as in the neighbourhood there are several other old churches which have been spoiled in the same way. In the choir of the church are some simple but fairly designed stalls of a late date, and in good condition.

The most interesting treasure of the building is a fine chalice with a curious history. It has incised figures of the twelve apostles in tiny oval panels round the knob, and enamels of the major and minor prophets round the base. The whole is in a good state of preservation. This old relic was formerly in S. George's Chapel, Windsor, in the time of Henry VIII. It came into the possession of the Marchese Da Passano, who at that time was Ambassador or Minister representing not only Italy but also France at the English Court. Traditions vary as to the way in which the chalice came into his possession. Some say it was given to him by the King ; some say that he bought it ;

## Riviera

others, that he won it at a game of chance. Anyhow he presented it to the old church of his native place.

There is also a fine ostensorio, ostensorio, or monstrance, with careful chiselled work, and two slips or bands of enamel in the upper portion. There is, again, a very fine and splendidly bound illuminated Psalter, from which irreverent hands have cut the largest and most beautiful illuminated letters and ornaments in several pages. The metal work on the binding is noticeable and in good condition, with strong bosses and delicate ornaments.

Explanations have already been given about the origin and early growth of the tiny republics which were found along these shores, and how they possessed their *loggie*, or places of business, corresponding to what we now call municipal or communal offices.

Levanto has still its *Loggia*, which was built in 1265, and repaired or rebuilt in 1405. That the meetings of its Parliament or Council took place in this loggia, and at the hour of Vespers, is proved by large numbers of the documents recording the deliberations, still remaining in the public archives.

For instance, to take a few of the headings at random :—

+ 1572 die 21 7bris in ore in logia cōis<sup>1</sup> levanti.

+ 1576 die quinta aprilis in domo cōis.

+ 1576 die xvj settis in dicta logia cōis.

+ MDLXXX die xxi februaris jn vesperis in Domo cōis L<sup>ti</sup>.

+ 1580 die 20 marcii sub logia cōis L<sup>ti</sup> pnte mco pretore.

+ ea die in vesperis in eodem loco pnte mco pretore.

---

<sup>1</sup> cōis = comunitatis.

## Savona to Spezia

The earliest now existing records of the Council of the Commune or *Comunità* of Levanto date from MDLxx p<sup>o</sup> (1571), and it was then resolved to send a commission to appear before the *M<sup>co</sup> Ufficio di San Giorgio della Ecc<sup>ma</sup> Repubblica di Genoa*, to complain of some supposed abuse of authority, and to request that their rights and privileges or "immunities" might be observed. The document goes on to say that the *gabellotti*, tax-gatherers,<sup>1</sup> "*. . . scodeno da huomini di levanto dritti e gabelle a quali detti huomini di Levanto no' sono obbligati, e questo forse senza saputa di Essa S<sup>ria</sup> Ill<sup>ma</sup> et detto M<sup>co</sup> ufficio di San Giorgio*,—exact from the people of Levanto duties and taxes to which the said people of Levanto are not bound, and this perhaps without the knowledge of the said Most Illustrious Signoria and the said Magnificent Office of Saint George."

In the dialect of the present day a carpenter is called *bancarà*, and at about the same date as the above-quoted document is another one which authorises the payment to "*Andree de groppo bancalario* of the sum of *sol: viginti pro mercede reparandi pontitem arcis levanti*." Another man was paid *soldos quindecim* for the third part of a *canella* of boards for the said bridge. Some one else provided bricks, and others rendered various minor services, so that the total cost of the repairs amounted to a sum we should hardly think extravagant—three *lire* seven *soldi*—as the document has it—

---

<sup>1</sup> The taxes were all farmed out to the highest bidder, a fruitful source of abuses.

## Riviera

*. . . que faciunt summa librarum trium et  
soldorum septem pro ponte tangente cōstitatis terre  
levanti sive . . . . .* Liii s. vii

for the share owing by the Commune of Levanto.<sup>1</sup>

The name Garibaldi is often found in these old papers ; and it is known that the family from which the hero of Caprera sprang, belonged to the neighbouring town of Chiávare.

We have elsewhere had occasion to note that in these old times the communal authorities were in the habit of laying in stores of corn for the public use in time of scarcity, disease, or other calamity. We have here the formal record, or "minutes," of a meeting at which the inhabitants generally, as well as the councillors, assisted, when the existing state of affairs was explained. They were reminded that a quantity of grain amounting to 25 *mine*—"partly mixed with beans and other qualities"—had been laid by. Further, that, as the new harvest was likely to be a good one, and as, "God be praised, the epidemic of contagious disease was lessening," it would be as well to sell off the present stock of grain in order to pay the creditors from whom it had been bought (!), and so avoid the payment of interest, especially as grain was going down in price ! At the same time money was required for other public purposes, and it is recorded that thirteen persons offered to invest 100 *lire* each in a communal loan. A further proposal was made to sell some pieces of communal land along the shore in order to provide warehouses.

<sup>1</sup> See footnote, p. 226.





**ZOAGLI**





## Savona to Spezia

Among the other documents is an interesting book of records of the Convent of the Nuns of the Holy Trinity.

This convent was founded by Signor Cesare Battara in 1605, and was authorised by the Bishop of Sarzana. The book referred to contains the rules of the order for the admission of nuns. The candidates had to be balloted for, and each was *accettata con voti bastanti*, accepted on sufficient votes, an indefinite method which allowed plenty of margin to the authorities in their decision. The *Dote*, or dower, which each nun had to pay was 2500 *lire*, besides 50 *lire* annually for her life ; for which payment satisfactory security had to be given. Special privileges were accorded to the girls of Levanto itself. Every year the Parliament was to elect three *borghesi*, burghers, natives of the place, to act as "Protectors of the Convent," but these men were not to be of less than forty years of age. What their precise duties were we are not told, nor what were their corresponding privileges, if any.

So uncertain and unsafe were the roads in those early times, *e.g.* 1615, that when the pay had to be sent to the garrison of Sarzana, it was packed on mule-back and accompanied by a guard of ten men. On another occasion (21st April 1615) Rocco Marrazzo was paid 6 *lire* 10 *soldi* *per haver portato a Lerice col suo vascello l'ordinario con la paga del presidio di Sarzana come*  $\text{D}^{\text{e}}$  74  $\text{v}^{\text{o}}$   $\text{p}^{\text{a}}$  *cassa*.

The old castle of Levanto still looks down upon the bay. Among the accounts are charges for repairing it ; for instance :—

## Riviera

1616. 7 di Giugno £47:9:10 che si fan boni ad Agostino Viccaro p. la metta di £94:19:8 p. lui spese p. far accomodare Il Castello conforme alla lista pñtata.

(1616. 7th of June 47 *lire* 9 *soldi* 10 *denari* paid to Agostino Viccaro for the half<sup>1</sup> of £94:19:8 spent by him for repairing the Castle according to the bill presented.)

The castle had its *tamburiniero*, or drummer, who was paid 6 *lire* a month for eight months of the year, and 4 *lire* a month for the rest. One of these officers bore the high-sounding name of *Pietro Cacianemico*, as who should say "Peter, the enemy-chaser!"

Another functionary or officer was the *Bombardero*, bombardier, or gunner, who had a pay of 8 *lire* per month. There are the usual entries for the purchase of gunpowder and its transport.

It is evident that Levanto must have been fairly rich at the beginning of the seventeenth century, for its doctor was paid 600 *lire* a year, by quarterly instalments in advance. The churches and confraternities were not omitted, and there is a note, rarely met with elsewhere, of the "organist" being paid 60 *lire* per year.

The communal archives are excellently well kept, and the utmost courtesy is shown to those visitors who are devoted to research.

Levanto has a summer season for bathers, and many Italians come here with their families. It lies so practically near to the large and important city of Spezia that there is no difficulty in obtaining both goods,

<sup>1</sup> The adjoining commune of *Valle* would pay the remaining half in this as in the other similar accounts.



**THE OLD CASTLE, LEVANTO**







## Savona to Spezia

company, and excitement, with small expenditure of time.

Its little neighbours are charming and picturesque. For instance, Monterosso has a church with a well-preserved façade in the usual style of the district (a sort of Lombard Gothic), with black and white bands, or, to be more precise, in the dark local marble, and a white variety, probably from the district of Carrara. On the heights above the town are some old remains of a castle, of little interest in themselves, though picturesque as seen from a distance ; but a very fine view is to be obtained there.

Vernazza is prettily situated on a tiny bay, or port, with high hills running right down into the sea on each side, and crowned with a couple of old round watch-towers. The church, in the lower portion of the town, is of early date, as is evident from the small portion of the apse which—in good ashlar work—is all that can be seen at present, some later and plastered additions having been built on to it. The houses and steep streets climb up the sides of the hills, and on the top is a little church of S. Francis, with a simple cloister where the Municipal offices are now situated. In the floor of the church are some marble memorial slabs with inscriptions, of which one or two examples may be recorded :—

In date 1679 :

Quid est homo nisi fumus  
et una brevis fossa  
Que tegit carnem et ossa.

## Riviera

In date 1748 on the tomb of the Castrucci :

Non mortui mortui  
ut mortui non mortui  
sibi suisq. parabant.

Some of the private houses here have a certain architectural character, and it may be noted how very much more masonry of good workmanship is to be found in this district than we can see along the rest of the Italian Riviera. It is only when we come to some of the villages of the French Riviera—for instance, in the Peillon valley, the neighbourhood of Sospel, and elsewhere—that we find similar work, especially in private houses.

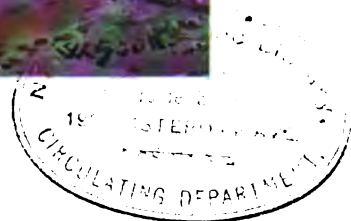
In some of the villages hereabout—as at Chiesa-nuova—the natives tell us that their traditions record the existence of *scalpellini*, stone-cutters, as especially noticeable among the inhabitants in old times.

If we take the train to the next station, Corniglia, we must be prepared to find at first no signs whatever of any village. It is necessary to climb a very steep and uninviting path—practically a long flight of rough steps—to the ridge of the hill. Then on the other side Corniglia is found, running round the two horns, so to speak, of the hills which form the little bay, and plunge sheer down into the sea.

Here, again, is a church with a good façade in wrought stone, and a fine rose window in white marble still undestroyed by the restorer ; but the interior has been deprived of all artistic character, and offers no features of interest.



**VERNAZZA**



1. The first step in the process is to identify the problem or issue that needs to be addressed. This involves gathering information and understanding the context of the problem.

## Savona to Spezia

A large quantity of white wine is made from the hillsides hereabout, and a visitor who wishes to gain an idea of what Italians can do in the way of terracing and cultivating steep slopes, which to a Northerner would seem utterly incapable of cultivation, might well go to Corniglia simply to observe these vineyards. From the shore to the top of the highest slopes the whole is cut into terraces. There are no trees of any sort, and in the winter—the best time for a visit of this kind—when the vines have not yet begun to shoot, there is absolutely no scrap of green anywhere to break the monotony of the rich reddish-brown earth, cut into formal lines. It is not beautiful, but most interesting as exhibiting the results of a brave, persistent, and successful struggle against enormous natural difficulties. In the summer and autumn, when the whole is covered with foliage, green of all shades melting into gold, orange, and scarlet, with the grapes hanging in thick clusters, the scene is quite another, and shows the reward of honest labour.

This is one of the *cinque terre* of the district, so famous for their excellent wines, mostly white, and very wholesome. Some of them are rather stronger than the rest, and when a Tuscan acquaintance who knew the district well was kindly warning us against some specially powerful and treacherous quality he said: "Of course if you only drink a litre or a litre and a half it won't hurt, but if you drink two or three litres *it will begin to go to your head!*"

Descending again to the shore and the railway



## Riviera

station, we may see on looking eastwards a quaint-looking village on a rock jutting out into the sea about a couple of miles away. This is Manarola, and it is quite likely that its picturesqueness may make us want to visit it. The wisest way is to catch a train if possible: there are not many. There is no road, but if the steam horse is not available and we are very adventurous, it is just possible to find a path, not even a mule track, but still a path cut into the face of the rock, and following its curves, rising to a giddy height, and with the blue-green water splashing round the base far away below. Though experienced Alpine climbers will, of course, find no difficulty, it should on no account be attempted by the nervous and impressionable, or those unaccustomed to positions of danger. To find this path walk along the shore past the point where the railway enters the tunnel, and nearly to where the rocks come right down into the sea, so that further progress in that direction is impossible. To the left, a few slight steps cut in the rock, and not offering any very tempting foothold, are all the indication available, but by following this track one finds that it improves for a time, and in many parts is quite convenient. It mounts and descends with occasionally some narrow terraces between itself and the sea, but at its most difficult portions there is nothing besides the bare sloping rock. On reaching the cemetery—at some slight distance from and above the village—there is no more difficulty or risk, and the path descends rapidly to the level of the railway.



**OLD BASTION, SARZANA**





## Savona to Spezia

We have here a village of the usual type and a church with a well-preserved stone façade, having a rich wheel window closely resembling those we have already seen elsewhere. The little torrent which dashes down through the village, runs into the sea just by the last houses, and visitors will be interested to note the curious and dangerous landing-place for the boats.

Only a few miles farther along the railway we enter a different district and hear a different mode of speech. We are in the *Lunigiana*, have left Liguria, are treading the soil of what was once Etruria, and note a change in the characteristics and habits of the people. Luni, which gives its name to the district, is practically the ancient *Luna* of the Romans mentioned in Macaulay's well-known lines:—

And in the vats of Luna,  
This year the must shall foam  
Round the white feet of laughing girls,  
Whose sires have marched to Rome.

Opinions are somewhat divided as to the exact site of the most ancient Luni, there having been apparently two successive foundations, the older being abandoned partly to escape the attacks of pirates, partly to avoid the malaria which developed round it owing to the want of land drainage.

So we come practically to the end of the Riviera, though Viareggio, a favourite bathing-place, bids for the patronage of winter visitors.

It would be a pity to leave without having taken a glance at old Sarzana, with its mediæval remains, its

## Riviera

ancient fortress, which has resisted the shock of so many sieges. Sarzana has been in a sense the successor of Luni, the seat of the famous bishopric of the latter place having been transferred there in 1204. Here the bishops, with the title of counts, or sometimes even princes of the Empire, exercised temporal as well as spiritual power.

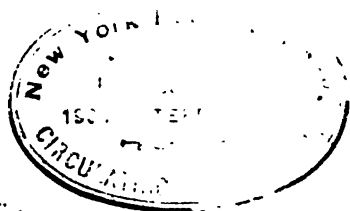
Here, again, was a loggia for the affairs of the Commune, as is proved by an agreement, dated 1319, with the adjacent Commune of Castello, and executed *sub logia que est iuxta palacium*, "in the loggia which is near the palace of the Bishop."

Here also the ubiquitous *Banca di San Giorgio* ruled supreme for a time, indeed several times, until in 1562 its rights were voluntarily yielded up to the Republic of Genoa, and Sarzana was able to enjoy considerable independence, rather as an ally than a slave of *La Superba*.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Malagoli, *Sarzana e Dintorni*, 1905.

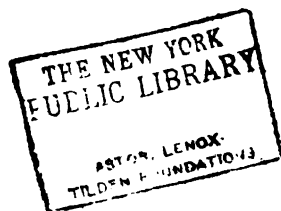


Berre.









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*Printed by R. & R. CLARK, LIMITED, Edinburgh.*









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